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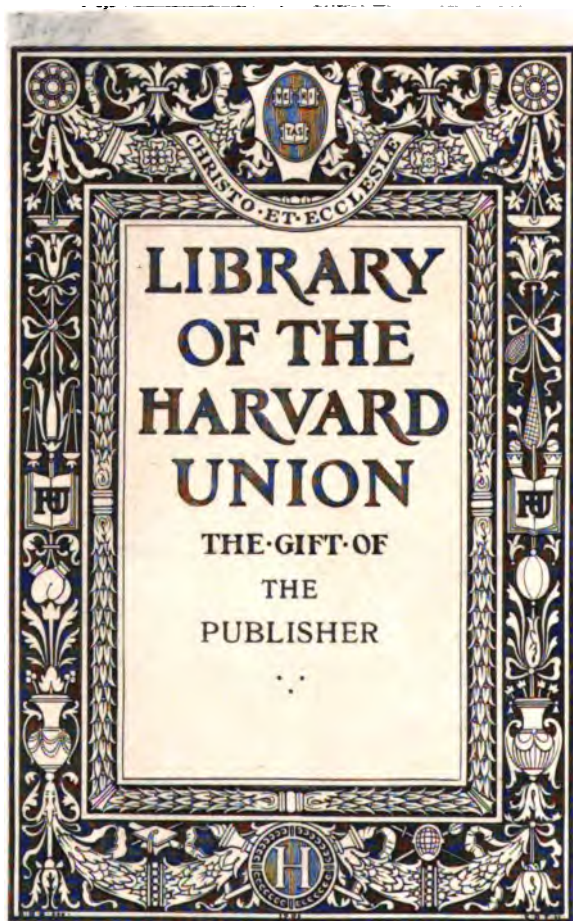


*Memoirs of the court of Marie
Antoinette, queen of France*

Campan (Jeanne-Louise-Henriette, Mme),
Alphonse de Lamartine

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Memoirs of the Court of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

Being the Historic Memoirs of Madame
Campan, First Lady-in-Waiting to the
Queen ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

In Two Volumes
Volume I. ♣ ♣



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MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF MARIE ANTOINETTE.

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

LOUIS XVI. possessed an immense crowd of confidants, advisers, and guides; he selected them even from among the factions which attacked him. Never, perhaps, did he make a full disclosure to any one of them, and certainly he spoke with sincerity to but very few. He invariably kept the reins of all secret intrigues in his own hand; and thence, doubtless, arose the want of coöperation and the weakness which were so conspicuous in his measures. From these causes considerable chasms will be found in the detailed history of the Revolution.

In order to become thoroughly acquainted with the latter years of the reign of Louis XV., memoirs written by the Duc de Choiseul, the Duc d'Aiguillon, the Maréchal de Richelieu,* and the Duc de La Vauguyon, should be before us. To give us a faithful portrait of the unfortunate reign of Louis XVI., the

* I heard Le Maréchal de Richelieu desire M. Campan, who was librarian to the Queen, not to buy the Memoirs which would certainly be attributed to him after his death, declaring them false by anticipation; and adding that he was ignorant of orthography, and had never amused himself with writing. Shortly after the death of the Marshal, one Soularie put forth Memoirs of the Maréchal de Richelieu.

Maréchal du Muy, M. de Maurepas, M. de Vergennes, M. de Malesherbes, the Duc d'Orléans, M. de La Fayette, the Abbé de Vermond, the Abbé Montesquieu, Mirabeau, the Duchesse de Polignac, and the Duchesse de Luynes should have noted faithfully in writing all the transactions in which they took decided parts. The secret political history of a later period has been disseminated among a much greater number of persons; there are Ministers who have published memoirs, but only when they had their own measures to justify, and then they confined themselves to the vindication of their own characters, without which powerful motive they probably would have written nothing. In general, those nearest to the Sovereign, either by birth or by office, have left no memoirs; and in absolute monarchies the mainsprings of great events will be found in particulars which the most exalted persons alone could know. Those who have had but little under their charge find no subject in it for a book; and those who have long borne the burden of public business conceive themselves to be forbidden by duty, or by respect for authority, to disclose all they know. Others, again, preserve notes, with the intention of reducing them to order when they shall have reached the period of a happy leisure; vain illusion of the ambitious, which they cherish, for the most part, but as a veil to conceal from their sight the hate-

ful image of their inevitable downfall! and when it does at length take place, despair or chagrin deprives them of fortitude to dwell upon the dazzling period which they never cease to regret.

Louis XVI. meant to write his own memoirs; the manner in which his private papers were arranged indicated this design. The Queen also had the same intention; she long preserved a large correspondence, and a great number of minute reports, made in the spirit and upon the event of the moment. But after the 20th of June, 1792, she was obliged to burn the larger portion of what she had so collected, and the remainder were conveyed out of France.

Considering the rank and situations of the persons I have named as capable of elucidating by their writings the history of our political storms, it will not be imagined that I aim at placing myself on a level with them; but I have spent half my life either with the daughters of Louis XV. or with Marie Antoinette. I knew the characters of those Princesses; I became privy to some extraordinary facts, the publication of which may be interesting, and the truth of the details will form the merit of my work.

I was very young when I was placed about the Princesses, the daughters of Louis XV., in the capacity of reader. I was acquainted with the Court of Versailles before the time of the marriage of Louis XVI. with the Archduchess Marie Antoinette.

My father, who was employed in the department of Foreign Affairs, enjoyed the reputation due to his talents and to his useful labours. He had travelled much. Frenchmen, on their return home from foreign countries, bring with them a love for their own, increased in warmth; and no man was more penetrated with this feeling, which ought to be the first virtue of every placeman, than my father. Men of high title, academicians, and learned men, both natives and foreigners, sought my father's acquaintance, and were gratified by being admitted into his house.

Twenty years before the Revolution I often heard it remarked that the imposing character of the power of Louis XIV. was no longer to be found in the Palace of Versailles; that the institutions of the ancient monarchy were rapidly sinking; and that the people, crushed beneath the weight of taxes, were miserable, though silent; but that they began to give ear to the bold speeches of the philosophers, who loudly proclaimed their sufferings and their rights; and, in short, that the age would not pass away without the occurrence of some great outburst, which would unsettle France, and change the course of its progress.

Those who thus spoke were almost all partisans of M. Turgot's system of administration: they were Mirabeau the father, Doctor Quesnay, Abbé Baudeau, and Abbé Nicoli, *chargé d'affaires* to Leopold, Grand

Duke of Tuscany, and as enthusiastic an admirer of the maxims of the innovators as his Sovereign.

My father sincerely respected the purity of intention of these politicians. With them he acknowledged many abuses in the Government; but he did not give these political sectarians credit for the talent necessary for conducting a judicious reform. He told them frankly that in the art of moving the great machine of Government, the wisest of them was inferior to a good magistrate; and that if ever the helm of affairs should be put into their hands, they would be speedily checked in the execution of their schemes by the immeasurable difference existing between the most brilliant theories and the simplest practice of administration.

Destiny having formerly placed me near crowned heads, I now amuse my solitude when in retirement with collecting a variety of facts which may prove interesting to my family when I shall be no more. The idea of collecting all the interesting materials which my memory affords occurred to me from reading the work entitled "Paris, Versailles, and the Provinces in the Eighteenth Century." That work, composed by a man accustomed to the best society, is full of piquant anecdotes, nearly all of which have been recognised as true by the contemporaries of the author. I have put together all that concerned the domestic life of an unfortunate Prin-

cess, whose reputation is not yet cleared of the stains it received from the attacks of calumny, and who justly merited a different lot in life, a different place in the opinion of mankind after her fall. These memoirs, which were finished ten years ago, have met with the approbation of some persons; and my son may, perhaps, think proper to print them after my decease.*

J. L. H. C.

*When Madame Campan wrote these lines, she did not anticipate that the death of her son would precede her own.

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Marie Antoinette

HISTORIC COURT MEMOIRS.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

MEMOIR OF MADAME CAMPAN.

JEANNE LOUISE HENRIETTE GENET was born in Paris on the 6th of October, 1752. M. Genet, her father, had obtained, through his own merit and the influence of the Duc de Choiseul, the place of first clerk in the Foreign Office.

Literature, which he had cultivated in his youth, was often the solace of his leisure hours. Surrounded by a numerous family, he made the instruction of his children his chief recreation, and omitted nothing which was necessary to render them highly accomplished. His clever and precocious daughter Henriette was very early accustomed to enter society, and to take an intelligent interest in current topics and public events. Accordingly, many of her relations being connected with the Court or holding official positions, she amassed a fund of interesting recollections and characteristic anecdotes, some gathered from personal experience, others handed down by old friends of the family.

"The first event which made any impression on me in my childhood," she says in her reminiscences, "was the attempt of Damiens to assassinate Louis XV. This occurrence struck me so forcibly that the most minute details relating to the confusion and grief which prevailed at Versailles on that day seem as present to my imagination as the most recent events. I had dined with my father and mother, in company with one of their friends. The drawing-room was lighted up with a number of candles, and four card-tables were already occupied, when a friend of the gentleman of the house came in, with a pale and terrified countenance, and said, in a voice scarcely audible, 'I bring you terrible news. The King has been assassinated!' Two ladies in the company fainted; a brigadier of the Body Guards threw down his cards and cried out, 'I do not wonder at it; it is those rascally Jesuits.' 'What are you saying, brother?' cried a lady, flying to him; 'would you get yourself arrested?' 'Arrested! For what? For unmasking those wretches who want a bigot for a King?' My father came in; he recommended circumspection, saying that the blow was not mortal, and that all meetings ought to be suspended at so critical a moment. He had brought the chaise for my mother, who placed me on her knees. We lived in the Avenue de Paris, and throughout our drive I heard incessant cries and sobs from the footpaths.

At last I saw a man arrested ; he was an usher of the King's chamber, who had gone mad, and was crying out, ' Yes, I know them ; the wretches ! the villains ! ' Our chaise was stopped by this bustle. My mother recognised the unfortunate man who had been seized ; she gave his name to the trooper who had stopped him. The poor usher was therefore merely conducted to the *gens d'armes*' guard-room, which was then in the avenue.

" I have often heard M. de Landsmath, equerry and master of the hounds, who used to come frequently to my father's, say that on the news of the attempt on the King's life he instantly repaired to his Majesty. I cannot repeat the coarse expressions he made use of to encourage his Majesty ; but his account of the affair, long afterwards, amused the parties in which he was prevailed on to relate it, when all apprehensions respecting the consequences of the event had subsided. This M. de Landsmath was an old soldier, who had given proofs of extraordinary valour ; nothing had been able to soften his manners or subdue his excessive bluntness to the respectful customs of the Court. The King was very fond of him. He possessed prodigious strength, and had often contended with Maréchal Saxe, renowned for his great bodily power, in trying the strength of their respective wrists.¹ M. de Landsmath had a thundering voice.

¹ One day when the King was hunting in the forest of St. Germain,

When he came into the King's apartment he found the Dauphin and Mesdames, his Majesty's daughters, there ; the Princesses, in tears, surrounded the King's bed. 'Send out all these weeping women, Sire,' said the old equerry ; 'I want to speak to you alone.' The King made a sign to the Princesses to withdraw. 'Come,' said Landsmath, 'your wound is nothing ; you had plenty of waistcoats and flannels on.' Then uncovering his breast, 'Look here,' said he, showing four or five great scars, 'these are something like wounds ; I received them thirty years ago ; now cough as loud as you can.' The King did so. 'Tis nothing at all,' said Landsmath ; 'you must laugh at it ; we shall hunt a stag together in four days.' 'But suppose the blade was poisoned,' said the King. 'Old grandams' tales,' replied Landsmath ; 'if it had been so, the waistcoats and flannels would have rubbed the poison off.' The King was pacified, and passed a very good night.

"His Majesty one day asked M. de Landsmath how old he was. He was aged, and by no means fond of thinking of his age ; he evaded the question. A fortnight later, Louis XV. took a paper out of his pocket and read aloud : 'On such a day in the month of

Landsmath, riding before him, wanted a cart, filled with the slime of a pond that had just been cleansed, to draw up out of the way. The carter resisted, and even answered with impertinence. Landsmath, without dismounting, seized him by the breast of his coat, lifted him up, and threw him into his cart. — MADAME CAMPAN.

— one thousand six hundred and eighty —, was baptised by me, rector of —, the son of the high and mighty lord,' etc. 'What's that?' said Landsmath, angrily; 'has your Majesty been procuring the certificate of my baptism?' 'There it is, you see, Landsmath,' said the King. 'Well, Sire, hide it as fast as you can; a prince entrusted with the happiness of twenty-five millions of people ought not wilfully to hurt the feelings of a single individual.'

"The King learned that Landsmath had lost his confessor, a missionary priest of the parish of Notre-Dame. It was the custom of the Lazarists to expose their dead with the face uncovered. Louis XV. wished to try his equerry's firmness. 'You have lost your confessor, I hear,' said the King. 'Yes, Sire.' 'He will be exposed with his face bare?' 'Such is the custom.' 'I command you to go and see him.' 'Sire, my confessor was my friend; it would be very painful to me.' 'No matter; I command you.' 'Are you really in earnest, Sire?' 'Quite so.' 'It would be the first time in my life that I had disobeyed my sovereign's order. I will go.' The next day the King at his *levée*, as soon as he perceived Landsmath, said, 'Have you done as I desired you, Landsmath?' 'Undoubtedly, Sire.' 'Well, what did you see?' 'Faith, I saw that your Majesty and I are no great shakes!'

"At the death of Queen Maria Leczinska, M. Cam-

pan,¹ then an officer of the chamber, having performed several confidential duties, the King asked Madame Adélaïde how he should reward him. She requested him to create an office in his household of master of the wardrobe, with a salary of a thousand crowns. 'I will do so,' said the King; 'it will be an honourable title; but tell Campan not to add a single crown to his expenses, for you will see they will never pay him.'

"Louis XV., by his dignified carriage, and the amiable yet majestic expression of his features, was worthy to succeed to Louis the Great. But he too frequently indulged in secret pleasures, which at last were sure to become known. During several winters, he was passionately fond of *candles' end balls*, as he called those parties amongst the very lowest classes of society. He got intelligence of the *picnics* given by the tradesmen, milliners, and sempstresses of Versailles, whither he repaired in a black domino, and masked, accompanied by the captain of his Guards, masked like himself. His great delight was to go *en brouette*.² Care was always taken to give notice to five or six officers of the King's or Queen's chamber to be there, in order that his Majesty might be surrounded by people on whom he could depend, without

¹ Her father-in-law, afterwards secretary to Marie Antoinette.

² In a kind of sedan-chair, running on two wheels, and drawn by a chairman.

finding it troublesome. Probably the captain of the Guards also took other precautions of this description on his part. My father-in-law, when the King and he were both young, has often made one amongst the servants desired to attend masked at these parties, assembled in some garret, or parlour of a public-house. In those times, during the carnival, masked companies had a right to join the citizens' balls; it was sufficient that one of the party should unmask and name himself.

"These secret excursions, and his too habitual intercourse with ladies more distinguished for their personal charms than for the advantages of education, were no doubt the means by which the King acquired many vulgar expressions which otherwise would never have reached his ears.

"Yet amidst the most shameful excesses the King sometimes suddenly resumed the dignity of his rank in a very noble manner. The familiar courtiers of Louis XV. had one day abandoned themselves to the unrestrained gaiety of a supper, after returning from the chase. Each boasted of and described the beauty of his mistress. Some of them amused themselves with giving a particular account of their wives' personal defects. An imprudent word, addressed to Louis XV., and applicable only to the Queen, instantly dispelled all the mirth of the entertainment. The King assumed his regal air, and knocking with

his knife on the table twice or thrice, 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'here is the King!'

"Those men who are most completely abandoned to dissolute manners are not, on that account, insensible to virtue in women. The Comtesse de Perigord was as beautiful as virtuous. During some excursions she made to Choisy, whither she had been invited, she perceived that the King took great notice of her. Her demeanour of chilling respect, her cautious perseverance in shunning all serious conversation with the monarch, were insufficient to extinguish this rising flame, and he at length addressed a letter to her, worded in the most passionate terms. This excellent woman instantly formed her resolution: honour forbade her returning the King's passion, whilst her profound respect for the sovereign made her unwilling to disturb his tranquillity. She therefore voluntarily banished herself to an estate she possessed called Chalais, near Barbezieux, the mansion of which had been uninhabited nearly a century; the porter's lodge was the only place in a condition to receive her. From this seat she wrote to his Majesty, explaining her motives for leaving Court; and she remained there several years without visiting Paris. Louis XV. was speedily attracted by other objects, and regained the composure to which Madame de Perigord had thought it her duty to sacrifice so much. Some years after, Mesdames' lady of honour died. Many great

families solicited the place. The King, without answering any of their applications, wrote to the Comtesse de Perigord: 'My daughters have just lost their lady of honour; this place, madame, is your due, as much on account of your personal qualities as of the illustrious name of your family.'

"Three young men of the college of St. Germain, who had just completed their course of studies, knowing no person about the Court, and having heard that strangers were always well treated there, resolved to dress themselves completely in the Armenian costume, and, thus clad, to present themselves to see the grand ceremony of the reception of several knights of the Order of the Holy Ghost. Their stratagem met with all the success with which they had flattered themselves. While the procession was passing through the long mirror gallery, the Swiss of the apartments placed them in the first row of spectators, recommending every one to pay all possible attention to the strangers. The latter, however, were imprudent enough to enter the *œil-de-bœuf* chamber, where were Messieurs Cardonne and Ruffin, interpreters of Oriental languages, and the first clerk of the consul's department, whose business it was to attend to everything which related to the natives of the East who were in France. The three scholars were immediately surrounded and questioned by these gentlemen, at first in modern Greek. Without being disconcerted,

they made signs that they did not understand it. They were then addressed in Turkish and Arabic; at length one of the interpreters, losing all patience, exclaimed, 'Gentlemen, you certainly must understand some of the languages in which you have been addressed. What country can you possibly come from then?' 'From St. Germain-en-Laye, sir,' replied the boldest among them; 'this is the first time you have put the question to us in French.' They then confessed the motive of their disguise; the eldest of them was not more than eighteen years of age. Louis XV. was informed of the affair. He laughed heartily, ordered them a few hours' confinement and a good admonition, after which they were to be set at liberty.

"Louis XV. liked to talk about death, though he was extremely apprehensive of it; but his excellent health and his royal dignity probably made him imagine himself invulnerable. He often said to people who had very bad colds, 'You've a churchyard cough there.' Hunting one day in the forest of Senard, in a year in which bread was extremely dear, he met a man on horseback carrying a coffin. 'Whither are you carrying that coffin?' 'To the village of ——,' answered the peasant. 'Is it for a man or a woman?' 'For a man.' 'What did he die of?' 'Of hunger,' bluntly replied the villager. The King spurred on his horse, and asked no more questions.

“Weak as Louis XV. was, the Parliaments would never have obtained his consent to the convocation of the States General. I heard an anecdote on this subject from two officers attached to that Prince’s household. It was at the period when the remonstrances of the Parliaments, and the refusals to register the decrees for levying taxes, produced alarm with respect to the state of the finances. This became the subject of conversation one evening at the *coucher* of Louis XV. ‘You will see, Sire,’ said a courtier, whose office placed him in close communication with the King, ‘that all this will make it absolutely necessary to assemble the States General.’ The King, roused by this speech from the habitual apathy of his character, seized the courtier by the arm, and said to him, in a passion, ‘Never repeat these words. I am not sanguinary; but had I a brother, and were he to dare to give me such advice, I would sacrifice him, within twenty-four hours, to the duration of the monarchy and the tranquillity of the kingdom.’

“Several years prior to his death the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI., had confluent smallpox, which endangered his life; and after his convalescence he was long troubled with a malignant ulcer under the nose. He was injudiciously advised to get rid of it by the use of extract of lead, which proved effectual; but from that time the Dauphin, who was corpulent,

insensibly grew thin, and a short, dry cough evinced that the humour, driven in, had fallen on the lungs. Some persons also suspected him of having taken acids in too great a quantity for the purpose of reducing his bulk. The state of his health was not, however, such as to excite alarm. At the camp at Compiègne, in July, 1764, the Dauphin reviewed the troops, and evinced much activity in the performance of his duties; it was even observed that he was seeking to gain the attachment of the army. He presented the Dauphiness to the soldiers, saying, with a simplicity which at that time made a great sensation, '*Mes enfans*, here is my wife.' Returning late on horseback to Compiègne, he found he had taken a chill; the heat of the day had been excessive; the Prince's clothes had been wet with perspiration. An illness followed, in which the Prince began to spit blood. His principal physician wished to have him bled; the consulting physicians insisted on purgation, and their advice was followed. The pleurisy, being ill cured, assumed and retained all the symptoms of consumption; the Dauphin languished from that period until December, 1765, and died at Fontainebleau, where the Court, on account of his condition, had prolonged its stay, which usually ended on the 2d of November.

"The Dauphiness, his widow, was deeply afflicted; but the immoderate despair which characterised her

grief induced many to suspect that the loss of the crown was an important part of the calamity she lamented. She long refused to eat enough to support life; she encouraged her tears to flow by placing portraits of the Dauphin in every retired part of her apartments. She had him represented pale, and ready to expire, in a picture placed at the foot of her bed, under draperies of gray cloth, with which the chambers of the Princesses were always hung in court mournings. Their grand cabinet was hung with black cloth, with an alcove, a canopy, and a throne, on which they received compliments of condolence after the first period of the deep mourning. The Dauphiness, some months before the end of her career, regretted her conduct in abridging it; but it was too late; the fatal blow had been struck. It may also be presumed that living with a consumptive man had contributed to her complaint. This Princess had no opportunity of displaying her qualities; living in a Court in which she was eclipsed by the King and Queen, the only characteristics that could be remarked in her were her extreme attachment to her husband, and her great piety.

“The Dauphin was little known, and his character has been much mistaken. He himself, as he confessed to his intimate friends, sought to disguise it. He one day asked one of his most familiar servants, ‘What do they say in Paris of that great fool of a Dauphin?’ The person interrogated seeming confused, the Dau-

phin urged him to express himself sincerely, saying, 'Speak freely; that is positively the idea which I wish people to form of me.'

"As he died of a disease which allows the last moment to be anticipated long beforehand, he wrote much, and transmitted his affections and his prejudices to his son by secret notes.

"Madame de Pompadour's brother received Letters of Nobility from his Majesty, and was appointed superintendent of the buildings and gardens. He often presented to her Majesty, through the medium of his sister, the rarest flowers, pineapples, and early vegetables from the gardens of Trianon and Choisy. One day, when the Marquise came into the Queen's apartments, carrying a large basket of flowers, which she held in her two beautiful arms, without gloves, as a mark of respect, the Queen loudly declared her admiration of her beauty; and seemed as if she wished to defend the King's choice, by praising her various charms in detail, in a manner that would have been as suitable to a production of the fine arts as to a living being. After applauding the complexion, eyes, and fine arms of the favourite, with that haughty condescension which renders approbation more offensive than flattering, the Queen at length requested her to sing, in the attitude in which she stood, being desirous of hearing the voice and musical talent by which the King's Court had been charmed in the performances

of the private apartments, and thus combining the gratification of the ears with that of the eyes. The Marquise, who still held her enormous basket, was perfectly sensible of something offensive in this request, and tried to excuse herself from singing. The Queen at last commanded her; she then exerted her fine voice in the solo of *Armida*—‘At length he is in my power.’ The change in her Majesty’s countenance was so obvious that the ladies present at this scene had the greatest difficulty to keep theirs.

“The Queen was affable and modest; but the more she was thankful in her heart to Heaven for having placed her on the first throne in Europe, the more unwilling she was to be reminded of her elevation. This sentiment induced her to insist on the observation of all the forms of respect due to royal birth; whereas in other princes the consciousness of that birth often induces them to disdain the ceremonies of etiquette, and to prefer habits of ease and simplicity. There was a striking contrast in this respect between Maria Leczinska and Marie Antoinette, as has been justly and generally observed. The latter unfortunate Queen, perhaps, carried her disregard of everything belonging to the strict forms of etiquette too far. One day, when the *Maréchale de Mouchy* was teasing her with questions relative to the extent to which she would allow the ladies the option of taking off or wearing their cloaks, and of pinning up the lappets of their

caps, or letting them hang down, the Queen replied to her, in my presence: 'Arrange all those matters, madame, just as you please; but do not imagine that a queen, born Archduchess of Austria, can attach that importance to them which might be felt by a Polish princess who had become Queen of France.'

"The virtues and information of the great are always evinced by their conduct; their accomplishments, coming within the scope of flattery, are difficult to be ascertained by any authentic proofs, and those who have lived near them may be excused for some degree of scepticism with regard to their attainments of this kind. If they draw or paint, there is always an able artist present, who, if he does not absolutely guide the pencil with his own hand, directs it by his advice. If a princess attempt a piece of embroidery in colours, of that description which ranks amongst the productions of the arts, a skilful embroideress is employed to undo and repair whatever has been spoilt. If the princess be a musician, there are no ears that will discover when she is out of tune; at least there is no tongue that will tell her so. This imperfection in the accomplishments of the great is but a slight misfortune. It is sufficiently meritorious in them to engage in such pursuits, even with indifferent success, because this taste and the protection it extends produce abundance of talent on every side. Maria Leczinska delighted in the art of painting, and

imagined she herself could draw and paint. She had a drawing-master, who passed all his time in her cabinet. She undertook to paint four large Chinese pictures, with which she wished to ornament her private drawing-room, which was richly furnished with rare porcelain and the finest marbles. This painter was entrusted with the landscape and background of the pictures; he drew the figures with a pencil; the faces and arms were also left by the Queen to his execution; she reserved to herself nothing but the draperies, and the least important accessories. The Queen every morning filled up the outline marked out for her, with a little red, blue, or green colour, which the master prepared on the palette, and even filled her brush with, constantly repeating, 'Higher up, Madame — lower down, Madame — a little to the right — more to the left.' After an hour's work, the time for hearing mass, or some other family or pious duty, would interrupt her Majesty; and the painter, putting the shadows into the draperies she had painted, softening off the colour where she had laid too much, etc., finished the small figures. When the work was completed the private drawing-room was decorated with her Majesty's work; and the firm persuasion of this good Queen that she had painted it herself was so entire that she left this cabinet, with all its furniture and paintings, to the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour. She added to the

bequest: 'The pictures in my cabinet being my own work, I hope the Comtesse de Noailles will preserve them for my sake.' Madame de Noailles, afterwards Maréchale de Mouchy, had a new pavilion constructed in her hôtel in the Faubourg St. Germain, in order to form a suitable receptacle for the Queen's legacy; and had the following inscription placed over the door, in letters of gold: 'The innocent falsehood of a good princess.'

"Maria Leczinska could never look with cordiality on the Princess of Saxony, who married the Dauphin; but the attentive behaviour of the Dauphiness at length made her Majesty forget that the Princess was the daughter of a king who wore her father's crown. Nevertheless, although the Queen now saw in the Princess of Saxony only a wife beloved by her son, she never could forget that Augustus wore the crown of Stanislaus. One day an officer of her chamber having undertaken to ask a private audience of her for the Saxon minister, and the Queen being unwilling to grant it, he ventured to add that he should not have presumed to ask this favour of the Queen had not the minister been the ambassador of a member of the family. 'Say of an *enemy* of the family,' replied the Queen, angrily; 'and let him come in.'

"Comte de Tessé, father of the last Count of that name, who left no children, was first equerry to Queen Maria Leczinska. She esteemed his virtues, but often

diverted herself at the expense of his simplicity. One day, when the conversation turned on the noble military actions by which the French nobility was distinguished, the Queen said to the Count: 'And your family, M. de Tessé, has been famous, too, in the field.' 'Ah, Madame, we have all been killed in our masters' service!' 'How rejoiced I am,' replied the Queen, 'that you have revived to tell me of it.' The son of this worthy M. de Tessé was married to the amiable and highly gifted daughter of the Duc d'Ayen, afterwards Maréchale de Noailles. He was exceedingly fond of his daughter-in-law, and never could speak of her without emotion. The Queen, to please him, often talked to him about the young Countess, and one day asked him which of her good qualities seemed to him most conspicuous. 'Her gentleness, Madame, her gentleness,' said he, with tears in his eyes; 'she is so mild, so soft, — as soft as a good carriage.' 'Well,' said her Majesty, 'that's an excellent comparison for a first equerry.'

"In 1780 Queen Maria Leczinska, going to mass, met old Maréchal Villars, leaning on a wooden crutch not worth fifteen pence. She rallied him about it, and the Marshal told her that he had used it ever since he had received a wound which obliged him to add this article to the equipments of the army. Her Majesty, smiling, said she thought this crutch so unworthy of him that she hoped to induce him to give

it up. On returning home she despatched M. Campan to Paris with orders to purchase at the celebrated Germain's the handsomest cane, with a gold enamelled crutch, that he could find, and carry it without delay to Maréchal Villars's hôtel, and present it to him from her. He was announced accordingly, and fulfilled his commission. The Marshal, in attending him to the door, requested him to express his gratitude to the Queen, and said that he had nothing fit to offer to an officer who had the honour to belong to her Majesty; but he begged him to accept of his old stick, saying that his grandchildren would probably some day be glad to possess the cane with which he had commanded at Marchiennes and Denain. The known frugality of Maréchal Villars appears in this anecdote; but he was not mistaken with respect to the estimation in which his stick would be held. It was thenceforth kept with veneration by M. Campan's family. On the 10th of August, 1792, a house which I occupied on the Carrousel, at the entrance of the Court of the Tuileries, was pillaged and nearly burnt down. The cane of Maréchal Villars was thrown into the Carrousel as of no value, and picked up by my servant. Had its old master been living at that period we should not have witnessed such a deplorable day.

“Before the Revolution there were customs and words in use at Versailles with which few people

were acquainted. The King's dinner was called 'The King's meat.' Two of the Body Guard accompanied the attendants who carried the dinner; every one rose as they passed through the halls, saying, 'There is the King's meat.' All precautionary duties were distinguished by the words 'in case.' One of the guards might be heard to say, 'I am *in case* in the forest of St. Germain.' In the evening they always brought the Queen a large bowl of broth, a cold roast fowl, one bottle of wine, one of orgeat, one of lemonade, and some other articles, which were called the *in case* for the night. An old medical gentleman, who had been physician in ordinary to Louis XIV., and was still living at the time of the marriage of Louis XV., told M. Campan's father an anecdote which seems too remarkable to have remained unknown; nevertheless he was a man of honour, incapable of inventing this story. His name was Lafosse. He said that Louis XIV. was informed that the officers of his table evinced, in the most disdainful and offensive manner, the mortification they felt at being obliged to eat at the table of the comptroller of the kitchen along with Molière, *valet de chambre* to his Majesty, because Molière had performed on the stage; and that this celebrated author consequently declined appearing at that table. Louis XIV., determined to put an end to insults which ought never to have been offered to one of the greatest geniuses of the age, said to him one

morning at the hour of his private *levée*, 'They say you live very poorly here, Molière; and that the officers of my chamber do not find you good enough to eat with them. Perhaps you are hungry; for my part I awoke with a very good appetite this morning: sit down at this table. Serve up my *in case* for the night there.' The King, then cutting up his fowl, and ordering Molière to sit down, helped him to a wing, at the same time taking one for himself, and ordered the persons entitled to familiar entrance, that is to say the most distinguished and favourite people at Court, to be admitted. 'You see me,' said the King to them, 'engaged in entertaining Molière, whom my *valets de chambre* do not consider sufficiently good company for them.' From that time Molière never had occasion to appear at the valets' table; the whole Court was forward enough to send him invitations.

"M. de Lafosse used also to relate that a brigade-major of the Body Guard, being ordered to place the company in the little theatre at Versailles, very roughly turned out one of the King's comptrollers who had taken his seat on one of the benches, a place to which his newly acquired office entitled him. In vain he insisted on his quality and his right. The altercation was ended by the brigade-major in these words: 'Gentlemen Body Guards, do your duty.' In this case their duty was to turn the offender out at the door. This comptroller, who had paid sixty or eighty thousand

frances for his appointment, was a man of a good family, and had had the honour of serving his Majesty five and twenty years in one of his regiments; thus ignominiously driven out of the hall, he placed himself in the King's way in the great hall of the Guards, and, bowing to his Majesty, requested him to vindicate the honour of an old soldier who had wished to end his days in his Prince's civil employment, now that age had obliged him to relinquish his military service. The King stopped, heard his story, and then ordered him to follow him. His Majesty attended the representation in a sort of amphitheatre, in which his arm-chair was placed; behind him was a row of stools for the captain of the Guards, the first gentleman of the chamber, and other great officers. The brigade-major was entitled to one of these places; the King stopped opposite the seat which ought to have been occupied by that officer and said to the comptroller, 'Take, monsieur, for this evening, the place near my person of him who has offended you, and let the expression of my displeasure at this unjust affront satisfy you instead of any other reparation.'

"During the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV. he never went out but in a chair carried by porters, and he showed a great regard for a man named D'Aigremont, one of those porters who always went in front and opened the door of the chair. The slightest preference shown by sovereigns, even to the mean-

est of their servants, never fails to excite observation.¹ The King had done something for this man's numerous family, and frequently talked to him. An abbé belonging to the chapel thought proper to request D'Aigremont to present a memorial to the King, in which he requested his Majesty to grant him a benefice. Louis XIV. did not approve of the liberty thus taken by his chairman, and said to him, in a very angry tone, 'D'Aigremont, you have been made to do a very unbecoming act, and I am sure there must be *simony* in the case.' 'No, Sire, there is not the least *ceremony* in the case, I assure you,' answered the poor man, in great consternation; 'the abbé only said he would give me a hundred louis.' 'D'Aigremont,' said the King, 'I forgive you on account of your ignorance and candour. I will give you the hundred louis out of my privy purse; but I will discharge you the very next time you venture to present a memorial to me.'

"Louis XIV. was very kind to those of his servants who were nearest his person; but the moment he assumed his royal deportment, those who were most

¹ People of the very first rank did not disdain to descend to the level of D'Aigremont. "Lausun," said the Duchesse d'Orléans in her "Mémoires," "sometimes affects stupidity in order to show people their own with impunity, for he is very malicious. In order to make Maréchal de Tessé feel the impropriety of his familiarity with people of the common sort, he called out, in the drawing-room at Marly, 'Maréchal, give me a pinch of snuff; some of your best, such as you take in the morning with Monsieur d'Aigremont, the chairman.'" — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

accustomed to see him in his domestic character were as much intimidated as if they were appearing in his presence for the first time in their lives. Some of the members of his Majesty's civil household, then called *commensalité*, enjoying the title of equerry, and the privileges attached to officers of the King's household, had occasion to claim some prerogatives, the exercise of which the municipal body of St. Germain, where they resided, disputed with them. Being assembled in considerable numbers in that town, they obtained the consent of the minister of the household to allow them to send a deputation to the King; and for that purpose chose from amongst them two of his Majesty's *valets de chambre* named Bazire and Soulaigre. The King's *levée* being over, the deputation of the inhabitants of the town of St. Germain was called in. They entered with confidence; the King looked at them, and assumed his imposing attitude. Bazire, one of these *valets de chambre*, was about to speak, but Louis the Great was looking on him. He no longer saw the Prince he was accustomed to attend at home; he was intimidated, and could not find words; he recovered, however, and began as usual with the word *Sire*. But timidity again overpowered him, and finding himself unable to recollect the slightest particle of what he came to say, he repeated the word *Sire* several times, and at length concluded by saying, '*Sire*, here is Soulaigre.' Soulaigre, who was

very angry with Bazire, and expected to acquit himself much better, then began to speak ; but he also, after repeating *Sire* several times, found his embarrassment increasing upon him, until his confusion equalled that of his colleague ; he therefore ended with '*Sire*, here is Bazire.' The King smiled, and answered, 'Gentlemen, I have been informed of the business upon which you have been deputed to wait on me, and I will take care that what is right shall be done. I am highly satisfied with the manner in which you have fulfilled your functions as deputies.' "

Mademoiselle Genet's education was the object of her father's particular attention. Her progress in the study of music and of foreign languages was surprising ; Albanèze instructed her in singing, and Goldoni taught her Italian. Tasso, Milton, Dante, and even Shakespeare, soon became familiar to her. But her studies were particularly directed to the acquisition of a correct and elegant style of reading. Rochon de Chabannes, Duclos, Barthe, Marmontel, and Thomas took pleasure in hearing her recite the finest scenes of Racine. Her memory and genius at the age of fourteen charmed them ; they talked of her talents in society, and perhaps applauded them too highly.

She was soon spoken of at Court. Some ladies of high rank, who took an interest in the welfare of her family, obtained for her the place of Reader to the Princesses. Her presentation, and the circumstances

which preceded it, left a strong impression on her mind. "I was then fifteen," she says; "my father felt some regret at yielding me up at so early an age to the jealousies of the Court. The day on which I first put on my Court dress, and went to embrace him in his study, tears filled his eyes, and mingled with the expression of his pleasure. I possessed some agreeable talents, in addition to the instruction which it had been his delight to bestow on me. He enumerated all my little accomplishments, to convince me of the vexations they would not fail to draw upon me."

Mademoiselle Genet, at fifteen, was naturally less of a philosopher than her father was at forty. Her eyes were dazzled by the splendour which glittered at Versailles. "The Queen, Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV., died," she says, "just before I was presented at Court. The grand apartments hung with black, the great chairs of state, raised on several steps, and surmounted by a canopy adorned with plumes; the caparisoned horses, the immense retinue in Court mourning, the enormous shoulder-knots, embroidered with gold and silver spangles, which decorated the coats of the pages and footmen,—all this magnificence had such an effect on my senses that I could scarcely support myself when introduced to the Princesses. The first day of my reading in the inner apartment of Madame Victoire I found it impossible to pronounce more than two sentences; my heart pal-

pitated, my voice faltered, and my sight failed. How well understood was the potent magic of the grandeur and dignity which ought to surround sovereigns! Marie Antoinette, dressed in white, with a plain straw hat, and a little switch in her hand, walking on foot, followed by a single servant, through the walks leading to the Petit Trianon, would never have thus disconcerted me; and I believe this extreme simplicity was the first and only real mistake of all those with which she is reproached."

When once her awe and confusion had subsided, Mademoiselle Genet was enabled to form a more accurate judgment of her situation. It was by no means attractive; the Court of the Princesses, far removed from the revels to which Louis XV. was addicted, was grave, methodical, and dull. Madame Adélaïde, the eldest of the Princesses, lived secluded in the interior of her apartments; Madame Sophie was haughty; Madame Louise a devotee. Mademoiselle Genet never quitted the Princesses' apartments; but she attached herself most particularly to Madame Victoire. This Princess had possessed beauty; her countenance bore an expression of benevolence, and her conversation was kind, free, and unaffected. The young reader excited in her that feeling which a woman in years, of an affectionate disposition, readily extends to young people who are growing up in her sight, and who possess some useful talents. Whole

days were passed in reading to the Princess, as she sat at work in her apartment. Mademoiselle Genet frequently saw there Louis XV., of whom she has related the following anecdote :

“ One day, at the Château of Compiègne, the King came in whilst I was reading to Madame. I rose and went into another room. Alone, in an apartment from which there was no outlet, with no book but a Massillon, which I had been reading to the Princess, happy in all the lightness and gaiety of fifteen, I amused myself with turning swiftly round, with my court hoop, and suddenly kneeling down to see my rose-coloured silk petticoat swelled around me by the wind. In the midst of this grave employment enters his Majesty, followed by one of the Princesses. I attempt to rise ; my feet stumble, and down I fall in the midst of my robes, puffed out by the wind. ‘ Daughter,’ said Louis XV., laughing heartily, ‘ I advise you to send back to school a reader who makes cheeses.’” The railleries of Louis XV. were often much more cutting, as Mademoiselle Genet experienced on another occasion, which, thirty years afterwards, she could not relate without an emotion of fear. “ Louis XV.,” she said, “ had the most imposing presence. His eyes remained fixed upon you all the time he was speaking ; and, notwithstanding the beauty of his features, he inspired a sort of fear. I was very young, it is true, when he first spoke to

me; you shall judge whether it was in a very gracious manner. I was fifteen. The King was going out to hunt, and a numerous retinue followed him. As he stopped opposite me he said, 'Mademoiselle Genet, I am assured you are very learned, and understand four or five foreign languages.' 'I know only two, Sire,' I answered, trembling. 'Which are they?' 'English and Italian.' 'Do you speak them fluently?' 'Yes, Sire, very fluently.' 'That is quite enough to drive a husband mad.' After this pretty compliment the King went on; the retinue saluted me, laughing; and, for my part, I remained for some moments motionless with surprise and confusion."

At the time when the French alliance was proposed by the Duc de Choiseul there was at Vienna a doctor named Gassner,¹ who had fled thither to seek an asylum against the persecutions of his sovereign, one of the ecclesiastical electors. Gassner, gifted with an extraordinary warmth of imagination, imagined that he received inspirations. The Empress protected him, saw him occasionally, rallied him on his visions, and, nevertheless, heard them with a sort of interest. "Tell me," said she to him one day, "whether my Antoinette will be happy." Gassner turned pale, and remained silent. Being still pressed by the Empress, and wishing to give a general expression to the idea with which he seemed deeply occupied,

¹ Jean Joseph Gassner, a pretender to miraculous powers.

"Madame," he replied, "there are crosses for all shoulders."¹

The occurrences at the Place Louis XV. on the marriage festivities at Paris are generally known. The conflagration of the scaffolds intended for the fireworks, the want of foresight of the authorities, the avidity of robbers, the murderous career of the coaches, brought about and aggravated the disasters of that day; and the young Dauphiness, coming from Versailles, by the Cours la Reine, elated with joy, brilliantly decorated, and eager to witness the rejoicings of the whole people, fled, struck with consternation and drowned in tears, from the dreadful scene. This tragic opening of the young Princess's life in France seemed to bear out Gassner's hint of disaster, and to be ominous of the terrible future which awaited her.

In the same year in which Marie Antoinette was married to the Dauphin, Henriette Genet married a son of M. Campan, already mentioned as holding an office at the Court; and when the household of the Dauphiness was formed, Madame Campan was appointed her reader, and received from Marie Antoinette a consistent kindness and confidence to which by her loyal service she was fully entitled.² Madame

¹ Related by Madame Campan on the authority of the governor of the children of Prince Kaunitz.

² One of Madame Campan's sisters, married to M. Angulé, Receveur Général des Finances, was made dresser to Marie Antoinette. Her sad fate is mentioned in Madame Campan's narrative. M. Angulé died of apoplexy in 1815, on hearing of the arrest of his son-in-law, Maréchal Ney.

Campan's intelligence and vivacity made her much more sympathetic to a young princess, gay and affectionate in disposition, and reared in the simplicity of a German Court, than her lady of honour, the Comtesse de Noailles. This respectable lady, who was placed near her as a minister of the laws of etiquette, instead of alleviating their weight, rendered their yoke intolerable to her.

"Madame de Noailles," says Madame Campan, "abounded in virtues. Her piety, charity, and irreproachable morals rendered her worthy of praise; but etiquette was to her a sort of atmosphere; at the slightest derangement of the consecrated order, one would have thought the principles of life would forsake her frame.

"One day I unintentionally threw this poor lady into a terrible agony. The Queen was receiving I know not whom, — some persons just presented, I believe; the lady of honour, the Queen's tirewoman, and the ladies of the bedchamber, were behind the Queen. I was near the throne, with the two women on duty. All was right, — at least I thought so. Suddenly I perceived the eyes of Madame de Noailles fixed on mine. She made a sign with her head, and then raised her eyebrows to the top of her forehead, lowered them, raised them again, then began to make little signs with her hand. From all this pantomime, I could easily perceive that something was not as it

should be ; and as I looked about on all sides to find out what it was, the agitation of the Countess kept increasing. The Queen, who perceived all this, looked at me with a smile ; I found means to approach her Majesty, who said to me in a whisper, ' Let down your lappets, or the Countess will expire.' All this bustle arose from two unlucky pins which fastened up my lappets, whilst the etiquette of costume said ' Lappets hanging down.' "

Her contempt of the vanities of etiquette became the pretext for the first reproaches levelled at the Queen. What misconduct might not be dreaded from a princess who could absolutely go out without a hoop ! and who, in the *salons* of Trianon, instead of discussing the important rights to chairs and stools, good-naturedly invited everybody to be seated.¹ The anti-Austrian party, discontented and vindictive, became spies upon her conduct, exaggerated her slightest errors, and calumniated her most innocent proceedings. " What seems unaccountable at the first

¹ M. de Fresne Forget, being one day in company with the Queen Marguerite, told her he was astonished how men and women with such great ruffs could eat soup without spoiling them ; and still more how the ladies could be gallant with their great fardingales. The Queen made no answer at that time, but a few days after, having a very large ruff on, and some *bouilli* to eat, she ordered a very long spoon to be brought, and ate her *bouilli* with it, without soiling her ruff. Upon which, addressing herself to M. de Fresne, she said, laughing, " There now, you see, with a little ingenuity one may manage anything." " Yes, faith, madame," said the good man, " as far as regards the soup I am satisfied." — LAPLACE'S " Collection," vol. II., p. 350.

glance," says Montjoie, "is that the first attack on the reputation of the Queen proceeded from the bosom of the Court. What interest could the courtiers have in seeking her destruction, which involved that of the King? Was it not drying up the source of all the advantages they enjoyed, or could hope for?"¹

When the terrible Danton exclaimed, "The kings of Europe menace us; it behoves us to defy them; let us throw down to them the head of a king as our gage!" these detestable words, followed by so cruel a result, formed, however, a formidable stroke of policy. But the Queen! What urgent reasons of state could Danton, Collot d'Herbois, and Robespierre allege

¹ Madame Campan relates the following among many anecdotes illustrative of the Queen's kindness of heart: "A petition was addressed to the Queen by a corporation in the neighbourhood of Paris, praying for the destruction of the game which destroyed their crops. I was the bearer of this petition to her Majesty, who said, 'I will undertake to have these good people relieved from so great an annoyance.' She gave the document to M. de Vermond in my presence, saying, 'I desire that immediate justice be done to this petition.' An assurance was given that her order should be attended to, but six weeks afterwards a second petition was sent up, for the nuisance had not been abated after all. If the second petition had reached the Queen, M. de Vermond would have received a sharp reprimand. She was always so happy when it was in her power to do good."

The quick repartee, which was another of the Queen's characteristics, was less likely to promote her popularity. "M. Brunier," says Madame Campan, "was physician to the royal children. During his visits to the palace, if the death of any of his patients was alluded to, he never failed to say, 'Ah! there I lost one of my best friends.' 'Well,' said the Queen, 'if he loses all his patients who are his friends, what will become of those who are not?'"

against her? What savage greatness did they discover in stirring up a whole nation to avenge their quarrel on a woman? What remained of her former power? She was a captive, a widow, trembling for her children! In those judges, who at once outraged modesty and nature; in that people whose vilest scoffs pursued her to the scaffold, who could have recognised the generous people of France? Of all the crimes which disgraced the Revolution, none was more calculated to show how the spirit of party can degrade the character of a nation.

The news of this dreadful event reached Madame Campan in an obscure retreat which she had chosen. She had not succeeded in her endeavours to share the Queen's captivity, and she expected every moment a similar fate. After escaping, almost miraculously, from the murderous fury of the Marseillais; after being denounced and pursued by Robespierre, and entrusted, through the confidence of the King and Queen, with papers of the utmost importance, Madame Campan went to Coubertin, in the valley of Chevreuse. Madame Auguié, her sister, had just committed suicide, at the very moment of her arrest.¹ The scaffold awaited Madame Campan, when the 9th of Thermidor restored her to life; but did not restore

¹ Maternal affection prevailed over her religious sentiments; she wished to preserve the wreck of her fortune for her children. Had she deferred this fatal act for one day she would have been saved; the cart which conveyed Robespierre to execution stopped her funeral procession!

to her the most constant object of her thoughts, her zeal, and her devotion.

A new career now opened to Madame Campan. At Coubertin, surrounded by her nieces, she was fond of directing their studies. This occupation caused her ideas to revert to the subject of education, and awakened once more the inclinations of her youth. At the age of twelve years she could never meet a school of young ladies passing through the streets without feeling ambitious of the situation and authority of their mistress. Her abode at Court had diverted but not altered her inclinations. "A month after the fall of Robespierre," she says, "I considered as to the means of providing for myself, for a mother seventy years of age, my sick husband, my child nine years old, and part of my ruined family. I now possessed nothing in the world but an assignat of five hundred francs. I had become responsible for my husband's debts, to the amount of thirty thousand francs. I chose St. Germain to set up a boarding-school, for that town did not remind me, as Versailles did, both of happy times and of the misfortunes of France. I took with me a nun of l'Enfant-Jesus, to give an unquestionable pledge of my religious principles. The school of St. Germain was the first in which the opening of an oratory was ventured on. The Directory was displeased at it, and ordered it to be immediately shut up; and some time after commissioners were sent to

desire that the reading of the Scriptures should be suppressed in my school. I inquired what books were to be substituted in their stead. After some minutes' conversation, they observed: 'Citizeness, you are arguing after the old fashion; no reflections. The nation commands; we must have obedience, and no reasoning.' Not having the means of printing my prospectus, I wrote a hundred copies of it, and sent them to the persons of my acquaintance who had survived the dreadful commotions. At the year's end I had sixty pupils; soon afterwards a hundred. I bought furniture and paid my debts."

The rapid success of the establishment at St. Germain was undoubtedly owing to the talents, experience, and excellent principles of Madame Campan, seconded by public opinion. All property had changed hands; all ranks found themselves confusedly jumbled by the shock of the Revolution: the grand seigneur dined at the table of the opulent contractor; and the witty and elegant marquise was present at the ball by the side of the clumsy peasant lately grown rich. In the absence of the ancient distinctions, elegant manners and polished language now formed a kind of aristocracy. The house of St. Germain, conducted by a lady who possessed the deportment and the habits of the best society, was not only a school of knowledge, but a school of the world.

"A friend of Madame de Beauharnais," continues

Madame Campan, "brought me her daughter Hortense de Beauharnais, and her niece Emilie de Beauharnais. Six months afterwards she came to inform me of her marriage with a Corsican gentleman, who had been brought up in the military school, and was then a general. I was requested to communicate this information to her daughter, who long lamented her mother's change of name. I was also desired to watch over the education of little Eugène de Beauharnais, who was placed at St. Germain, in the same school with my son.

"A great intimacy sprang up between my nieces and these young people. Madame de Beauharnais set out for Italy, and left her children with me. On her return, after the conquests of Bonaparte, that general, much pleased with the improvement of his stepdaughter, invited me to dine at Malmaison, and attended two representations of 'Esther' at my school."

He also showed his appreciation of her talents by sending his sister Caroline to St. Germain. Shortly before Caroline's marriage to Murat, and while she was yet at St. Germain, Napoleon observed to Madame Campan: "I do not like those love matches between young people whose brains are excited by the flames of the imagination. I had other views for my sister. Who knows what high alliance I might have procured for her! She is thoughtless, and does not form

a just notion of my situation. The time will come when, perhaps, sovereigns might dispute for her hand. She is about to marry a brave man; but in my situation that is not enough. Fate should be left to fulfil her decrees.”¹

Madame Campan dined at the Tuileries in company with the Pope’s nuncio, at the period when the Concordat was in agitation. During dinner the First Consul astonished her by the able manner in which he conversed on the subject under discussion. She said he argued so logically that his talent quite amazed her. During the consulate Napoleon one day said to her, “If ever I establish a republic of women, I shall make you First Consul.”

Napoleon’s views as to “woman’s mission” are now well known. Madame Campan said that she heard from him that when he founded the convent of the Sisters of la Charité he was urgently solicited to permit perpetual vows. He, however, refused to do so, on the ground that tastes may change, and that he did not see the necessity of excluding from the world women who might some time or other return to it, and become useful members of society. “Nun-

¹ Madame Murat one day said to Madame Campan: “I am astonished that you are not more awed in our presence; you speak to us with as much familiarity as when we were your pupils!” “The best thing you can do,” replied Madame Campan, “is to forget your titles when you are with me, for I can never be afraid of queens whom I have held under the rod.”

neries," he added, "assail the very roots of population. It is impossible to calculate the loss which a nation sustains in having ten thousand women shut up in cloisters. War does but little mischief; for the number of males is at least one-twenty-fifth greater than that of females. Women may, if they please, be allowed to make perpetual vows at fifty years of age; for then their task is fulfilled."

Napoleon once said to Madame Campan, "The old systems of education were good for nothing; what do young women stand in need of, to be well brought up in France?" "Of *mothers*," answered Madame Campan. "It is well said," replied Napoleon. "Well, madame, let the French be indebted to you for bringing up mothers for their children." "Napoleon one day interrupted Madame de Staël in the midst of a profound political argument to ask her whether she had nursed her children."

Never had the establishment at St. Germain been in a more flourishing condition than in 1802-3. What more could Madame Campan wish? For ten years absolute in her own house, she seemed also safe from the caprice of power. But the man who then disposed of the fate of France and Europe was soon to determine otherwise.

After the battle of Austerlitz the State undertook to bring up, at the public expense, the sisters, daughters, or nieces of those who were decorated with the

Cross of Honour. The children of the warriors killed or wounded in glorious battle were to find paternal care in the ancient abodes of the Montmorencys and the Condés. Accustomed to concentrate around him all superior talents, fearless himself of superiority, Napoleon sought for a person qualified by experience and abilities to conduct the institution of Ecouen; he selected Madame Campan.

Comte de Lacepède, the pupil, friend, and rival of Buffon, then Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour, assisted her with his enlightened advice. Napoleon, who could descend with ease from the highest political subjects to the examination of the most minute details; who was as much at home in inspecting a boarding-school for young ladies as in reviewing the grenadiers of his guard; whom it was impossible to deceive, and who was not unwilling to find fault when he visited the establishment at Ecouen, — was forced to say, "*It is all right.*"¹

"In the summer of 1811," relates Madame Campan, "Napoleon, accompanied by Marie Louise and several personages of distinction, visited the establishment at Ecouen. After inspecting the chapel and the

¹ Napoleon wished to be informed of every particular of the furniture, government, and order of the house, the instruction and education of the pupils. The internal regulations were submitted to him. One of the intended rules, drawn up by Madame Campan, proposed that the children should hear mass on Sundays and Thursdays. Napoleon himself wrote on the margin, "every day."

refectories, Napoleon desired that the three principal pupils might be presented to him. 'Sire,' said I, 'I cannot select three; I must present six.' He turned on his heel and repaired to the platform, where, after seeing all the classes assembled, he repeated his demand. 'Sire,' said I, 'I beg leave to inform your Majesty that I should commit an injustice towards several other pupils who are as far advanced as those whom I might have the honour to present to you.'

"Berthier and others intimated to me, in a low tone of voice, that I should get into disgrace by my non-compliance. Napoleon looked over the whole of the house, entered into the most trivial details, and after addressing questions to several of the pupils: 'Well, madame,' said he, 'I am satisfied; show me your six best pupils.'" Madame Campan presented them to him; and as he stepped into his carriage, he desired that their names might be sent to Berthier. On addressing the list to the Prince de Neufchâtel, Madame Campan added to it the names of four other pupils, and all the ten obtained a pension of 300 francs. During the three hours which this visit occupied, Marie Louise did not utter a single word.

M. de Beaumont, chamberlain to the Empress Josephine, one day at Malmaison was expressing his regret that M. D——, one of Napoleon's generals, who had recently been promoted, did not belong to a great family. "You mistake, monsieur," observed Madame

Campan, "he is of very ancient descent; he is one of the nephews of Charlemagne. All the heroes of our army sprang from the elder branch of that sovereign's family, who never emigrated."

When Madame Campan related this circumstance she added: "After the 30th of March, 1814, some officers of the army of Condé presumed to say to certain French marshals that it was a pity they were not more nobly connected. In answer to this, one of them said, 'True nobility, gentlemen, consists in giving proofs of it. The field of honour has witnessed ours; but where are we to look for yours? Your swords have rusted in their scabbards. Our laurels may well excite envy; we have earned them nobly, and we owe them solely to our valour. You have merely inherited a name. This is the distinction between us.'"¹

Napoleon used to observe that if he had had two such field-m Marshals as Suchet in Spain he would have not only conquered but kept the Peninsula. Suchet's sound judgment, his governing yet conciliating spirit, his military tact, and his bravery, had procured him astonishing success. "It is to be regretted," added he, "that a sovereign cannot *improvise* men of his stamp."²

¹ When one of the princes of the smaller German States was showing *Maréchal Lannes*, with a contemptuous superiority of manner but ill concealed, the portraits of his ancestors, and covertly alluding to the absence of *Lannes's*, that general turned the tables on him by haughtily remarking, "But I *am* an ancestor."

² *Apropos* of the merits of his various generals, Napoleon said: "I

On the 19th of March, 1815, a number of papers were left in the King's closet. Napoleon ordered them to be examined, and among them was found the letter written by Madame Campan to Louis XVIII., immediately after the first restoration. In this letter she enumerated the contents of the portfolio which Louis XVI. had placed under her care. When Napoleon read this letter, he said, "Let it be sent to the office of Foreign Affairs; it is an historical document."

Madame Campan thus described a visit from the Czar of Russia: "A few days after the battle of Paris the Emperor Alexander came to Ecouen, and he did me the honour to breakfast with me. After showing him over the establishment I conducted him to the park, the most elevated point of which overlooked the plain of St. Denis. 'Sire,' said I, 'from this point I saw the battle of Paris.' 'If,' replied the Emperor, 'that battle had lasted two hours longer we should not have had a single cartridge at our disposal. We feared that we had been betrayed; for on arriving so precipitately before Paris all our plans were laid, and we did not expect the firm resistance we experienced.' I next conducted the Emperor to the chapel, and showed him the seats occupied by *le connétable* (the

give the preference to Suchet. Before his time Masséna was the first; but he may be considered as dead. Suchet, Clausel, and Gérard are now in my opinion the best French generals." — MADAME JUNOT'S (*Duchesse d'Abantès*) "Memoirs," edit. 1883, vol. iii., p. 291.

constable) of Montmorency, and *la connétable* (the constable's lady), when they went to hear mass. 'Barbarians like us,' observed the Emperor, 'would say *la connétable* and *le connétable*.'

"The Czar inquired into the most minute particulars respecting the establishment of Ecouen, and I felt great pleasure in answering his questions. I recollect having dwelt on several points which appeared to me to be very important, and which were in their spirit hostile to aristocratic principles. For example, I informed his Majesty that the daughters of distinguished and wealthy individuals and those of the humble and obscure mingled indiscriminately in the establishment. 'If,' said I, 'I were to observe the least pretension on account of the rank or fortune of parents, I should immediately put an end to it. The most perfect equality is preserved; distinction is awarded only to merit and industry. The pupils are obliged to cut out and make all their own clothes. They are taught to clean and mend lace; and two at a time, they by turns, three times a week, cook and distribute food to the poor of the village. The young girls who have been brought up at Ecouen, or in my boarding-school at St. Germain, are thoroughly acquainted with everything relating to household business, and they are grateful to me for having made that a part of their education. In my conversations with them I have always taught them that on domestic manage-

ment depends the preservation or dissipation of their fortunes.'

"The post-master of Ecouen was in the courtyard at the moment when the Emperor, as he stepped into his carriage, told me he would send some sweetmeats for the pupils. I immediately communicated to them the intelligence, which was joyfully received ; but the sweetmeats were looked for in vain. When Alexander set out for England he changed horses at Ecouen, and the post-master said to him : ' Sire, the pupils of Ecouen are still expecting the sweetmeats which your Majesty promised them.' To which the Emperor replied that he had directed Saken to send them. The Cossacks had most likely devoured the sweetmeats, and the poor little girls, who had been so highly flattered by the promise, never tasted them."

A second house was formed at St. Denis, on the model of that of Ecouen. Perhaps Madame Campan might have hoped for a title to which her long labours gave her a right ; perhaps the superintendence of the two houses would have been but the fair recompense of her services ; but her fortunate years had passed : her fate was now to depend on the most important events. Napoleon had accumulated such a mass of power as no one but himself in Europe could overturn. France, content with thirty years of victories, in vain asked for peace and repose. The army which had triumphed in the sands of Egypt, on the summits

of the Alps, and in the marshes of Holland, was to perish amidst the snows of Russia. Nations combined against a single man. The territory of France was invaded. The orphans of Ecouen, from the windows of the mansion which served as their asylum, saw in the distant plain the fires of the Russian bivouacs, and once more wept the deaths of their fathers. Paris capitulated. France hailed the return of the descendants of Henri IV.; they reascended the throne so long filled by their ancestors, which the wisdom of an enlightened prince established on the empire of the laws.¹

This moment, which diffused joy amongst the faithful servants of the royal family, and brought them the rewards of their devotion, proved to Madame Campan a period of bitter vexation. The hatred of her enemies had revived. The suppression of the school at Ecouen had deprived her of her position; the most absurd calumnies followed her into her retreat; her attachment to the Queen was suspected; she was accused not only of ingratitude but of perfidy. Slander has little effect on youth, but in the decline of life its darts are envenomed with a mortal

¹ A lady, connected with the establishment of St. Denis, told Madame Campan that Napoleon visited it during the Hundred Days, and that the pupils were so delighted to see him that they crowded round him, endeavouring to touch his clothes, and evincing the most extravagant joy. The matron endeavoured to silence them; but Napoleon said, "Let them alone; let them alone. This may weaken the head, but it strengthens the heart."

poison. The wounds which Madame Campan had received were deep. Her sister, Madame Anguié, had destroyed herself; M. Rousseau, her brother-in-law, had perished, a victim of the reign of terror. In 1813 a dreadful accident had deprived her of her niece, Madame de Broc, one of the most amiable and interesting beings that ever adorned the earth. Madame Campan seemed destined to behold those whom she loved go down to the grave before her.

Beyond the walls of the mansion of Ecouen, in the village which surrounds it, Madame Campan had taken a small house where she loved to pass a few hours in solitary retirement. There, at liberty to abandon herself to the memory of the past, the superintendent of the imperial establishment became, once more, for the moment, the first lady of the chamber to Marie Antoinette. To the few friends whom she admitted into this retreat she would show, with emotion, a plain muslin gown which the Queen had worn, and which was made from a part of Tippoo Saib's present. A cup, out of which Marie Antoinette had drunk; a writing-stand, which she had long used, were, in her eyes, of inestimable value; and she has often been discovered sitting, in tears, before the portrait of her royal mistress.

After so many troubles Madame Campan sought a peaceful retreat. Paris had become odious to her.

She paid a visit to one of her most beloved pupils, Mademoiselle Crouzet, who had married a physician at Mantes, a man of talent, distinguished for his intelligence, frankness, and cordiality.¹ Mantes is a cheerful place of residence, and the idea of an abode there pleased her. A few intimate friends formed a pleasant society, and she enjoyed a little tranquillity after so many disturbances. The revisal of her "Memoirs," the arrangement of the interesting anecdotes of which her "Recollections" were to consist, alone diverted her mind from the one powerful sentiment which attached her to life. She lived only for her son. M. Campan deserved the tenderness of his mother. No sacrifice had been spared for his education. After having pursued that course of study which, under the Imperial Government, produced men of such distinguished merit, he was waiting till time and circumstances should afford him an opportunity of devoting his services to his country. Although the state of his health was far from good, it did not threaten any rapid or premature decay; he was, however, after a few days' illness, suddenly taken from his family. "I never witnessed so heartrending a scene," M. Maigne says, "as that which took place when Maréchal Ney's lady, her niece, and Madame Pannelier,

¹ M. Maigne, physician to the infirmaries at Mantes. Madame Campan found in him a friend and comforter, of whose merit and affection she knew the value.

her sister, came to acquaint her with this misfortune.¹ When they entered her apartment she was in bed. All three at once uttered a piercing cry. The two ladies threw themselves on their knees, and kissed her hands, which they bedewed with tears. Before they could speak to her she read in their faces that she no longer possessed a son. At that instant her large eyes, opening wildly, seemed to wander. Her face grew pale, her features changed, her lips lost their colour, she struggled to speak, but uttered only inarticulate sounds, accompanied by piercing cries. Her gestures were wild, her reason was suspended. Every part of her being was in agony. To this state of anguish and despair no calm succeeded, until her tears began to flow. Friendship and the tenderest cares succeeded for a moment in calming her grief, but not in diminishing its power. This violent crisis had disturbed her whole organisation. A cruel disorder, which required a still more cruel operation, soon manifested itself. The presence of her family, a tour which she made in Switzerland, a residence at Baden, and, above all, the sight, the tender and charming conversation of a person by whom she was affectionately beloved, occasionally diverted her mind, and in a slight degree relieved her suffering." She underwent a serious operation, performed with extraordinary

¹ The wife of *Maréchal Ney* was a daughter of *Madame Anguîé*, and had been an intimate friend of *Hortense Beauharnais*.

promptitude and the most complete success. No unfavourable symptoms appeared ; Madame Campan was thought to be restored to her friends ; but the disorder was in the blood ; it took another course : the chest became affected. "From that moment," says M. Maigne, "I could never look on Madame Campan as living ; she herself felt that she belonged no more to this world."

"My friend," she said to her physician the day before her death, "I am attached to the simplicity of religion. I hate all that savours of fanaticism." When her codicil was presented for her signature, her hand trembled ; "It would be a pity," she said, "to stop when so fairly on the road."

Madame Campan died on the 16th of March, 1822. The cheerfulness she displayed throughout her malady had nothing affected in it. Her character was naturally powerful and elevated. At the approach of death she evinced the soul of a sage, without abandoning for an instant her feminine character.

CHAPTER I.

The Court of Louis XV. — His Character. — The King's *Debut*. — Characters of Mesdames His Daughters. — Retreat of Madame Louise to the Carmelites of St. Denis. — Madame du Barry. — The Court Divided between the Party of the Duc de Choiseul and That of the Duc d'Aiguillon.

I WAS fifteen years of age when I was appointed reader to Mesdames. I will begin by describing the Court at that period.

Maria Leczinska was just dead; the death of the Dauphin had preceded hers by three years; the Jesuits were suppressed, and piety was to be found at Court only in the apartments of Mesdames. The Duc de Choiseul ruled.

Etiquette still existed at Court with all the forms it had acquired under Louis XIV.; dignity alone was wanting. As to gaiety, there was none. Versailles was not the place at which to seek for assemblies where French spirit and grace were displayed. The focus of wit and intelligence was Paris.

The King thought of nothing but the pleasures of the chase: it might have been imagined that the courtiers indulged themselves in making epigrams

by hearing them say seriously, on those days when the King did not hunt, "The King does nothing to-day."¹

The arrangement beforehand of his movements was also a matter of great importance with Louis XV. On the first day of the year he noted down in his almanac the days of departure for Compiègne, Fontainebleau, Choisy, etc. The weightiest matters, the most serious events, never deranged this distribution of his time.

Since the death of the Marquise de Pompadour, the King had no titled mistress; he contented himself with his *seraglio* in the Parc-aux-Cerfs. It is well known that the monarch found the separation of Louis de Bourbon from the King of France the most animating feature of his royal existence. "They would have it so; they thought it for the best," was his way of expressing himself when the measures of his ministers were unsuccessful. The King delighted to manage the most disgraceful points of his private expenses himself; he one day sold to a head clerk in the War Department a house in which one of his mistresses had lodged; the contract ran in the name of Louis de Bourbon, and the purchaser himself took in a bag the price of the house in gold to the King in his private closet.²

¹ In sporting usage (see SOULAIRE, p. 316).

² Until recently little was known about the Parc-aux-Cerfs, and it was

Louis XV. saw very little of his family. He came every morning by a private staircase into the apartment of Madame Adélaïde.¹ He often brought and drank there coffee that he had made himself. Madame Adélaïde pulled a bell which apprised Madame Victoire of the King's visit; Madame Victoire, on rising to go to her sister's apartment, rang for Madame Sophie, who in her turn rang for Madame Louise. The apartments of Mesdames were of very large dimensions. Madame Louise occupied the farthest room. This latter lady was deformed and very short; the poor Princess used to run with all her might to join the daily meeting, but, having a number of rooms to cross, she frequently,

believed that a great number of young women had been maintained there at enormous expense. The investigations of M. J. A. Le Roi, given in his interesting work, "*Curiosités Historiques sur Louis XIII., Louis XIV., Louis XV.,*" etc., Paris, Plon, 1864, have thrown fresh light upon the matter. The result he arrives at (see page 229 of his work) is that the house in question (No. 4 Rue St. Médéric, on the site of the Parc-aux-Cerfs, or breeding-place for deer, of Louis XIII.) was very small, and could have held only one girl, the woman in charge of her, and a servant. Most of the girls left it only when about to be confined, and it sometimes stood vacant for five or six months. It may have been rented before the date of purchase, and other houses seem sometimes to have been used also; but in any case, it is evident that both the number of girls and the expense incurred have been absurdly exaggerated. The system flourished under Madame de Pompadour, but ceased as soon as Madame du Barry obtained full power over the King, and the house was then sold to M. J. B. Sévin for 16,000 livres, on 27th May, 1771, Louis not acting under the name of Louis de Bourbon, but as King,—" *Vente par le Roi, notre Sire.*" In 1755 he had also been declared its purchaser in a similar manner. Thus, Madame Campan is in error in saying that the King made the contract as Louis de Bourbon.

¹ Louis XV. seemed to feel for Madame Adélaïde the tenderness he had had for the Duchesse de Bourgogne, his mother, who perished so sud-

in spite of her haste, had only just time to embrace her father before he set out for the chase.

Every evening, at six, Mesdames interrupted my reading to them to accompany the princes to Louis XV.; this visit was called the King's *débotter*,¹ and was marked by a kind of etiquette. Mesdames put on an enormous hoop, which set out a petticoat ornamented with gold or embroidery; they fastened a long train round their waists, and concealed the undress of the rest of their clothing by a long cloak of black taffety which enveloped them up to the chin. The *chevaliers d'honneur*, the ladies in waiting, the pages, the equerries, and the ushers bearing large flambeaux, accompanied them to the King. In a moment the whole palace, generally so still, was in motion; the King kissed each Princess on the forehead, and the visit was so short that the reading which it interrupted was frequently resumed at the end of a quarter of an hour; Mesdames returned to their apartments, and untied the strings of their petticoats and trains; they resumed their tapestry, and I my book.

During the summer season the King sometimes

denly, under the eyes and almost in the arms of Louis XIV. The birth of Madame Adélaïde, 23d March, 1732, was followed by that of Madame Victoire Louise Marie Thérèse on the 11th May, 1733. Louis had, besides, six daughters: Mesdames Sophie and Louise, who are mentioned in this chapter; the Princesses Marie and Felicité, who died young; Madame Henriette died at Versailles in 1752, aged twenty-four; and finally, Madame the Duchess of Parma, who also died at the Court.

¹ *Débotter*, meaning the time of unbooting.

came to the residence of Mesdames before the hour of his *débotter*. One day he found me alone in Madame Victoire's closet, and asked me where *Coche*¹ was; I started, and he repeated his question, but without being at all the more understood. When the King was gone I asked Madame of whom he spoke. She told me that it was herself, and very coolly explained to me, that, being the fattest of his daughters, the King had given her the familiar name of *Coche*; that he called Madame Adélaïde, *Loque*,² Madame Sophie, *Graille*,³ and Madame Louise, *Chiffe*.⁴ The people of the King's household observed that he knew a great number of such words; possibly he had amused himself with picking them out from dictionaries. If this style of speaking betrayed the habits and tastes of the King, his manner savoured nothing of such vulgarity; his walk was easy and noble, he had a dignified carriage of the head, and his aspect, without being severe, was imposing; he combined great politeness with a truly regal demeanour, and gracefully saluted the humblest woman whom curiosity led into his path.

He was very expert in a number of trifling matters which never occupy attention but when there is a lack of something better to employ it; for instance, he would knock off the top of an egg-shell at a single stroke of his fork; he therefore always ate eggs when

¹ Piggy.² Tattars.³ Mite.⁴ Rubbish.

he dined in public, and the Parisians who came on Sundays to see the King dine, returned home less struck with his fine figure than with the dexterity with which he broke his eggs.

Repartees of Louis XV., which marked the keenness of his wit and the elevation of his sentiments, were quoted with pleasure in the assemblies of Versailles.

This Prince was still beloved ; it was wished that a style of life suitable to his age and dignity should at length supersede the errors of the past, and justify the love of his subjects. It was painful to judge him harshly. If he had established avowed mistresses at Court, the uniform devotion of the Queen was blamed for it. Mesdames were reproached for not seeking to prevent the King's forming an intimacy with some new favourite. Madame Henriette, twin sister of the Duchess of Parma, was much regretted, for she had considerable influence over the King's mind, and it was remarked that if she had lived she would have been assiduous in finding him amusements in the bosom of his family, would have followed him in his short excursions, and would have done the honours of the *petits soupers* which he was so fond of giving in his private apartments.

Mesdames too much neglected the means of pleasing the King, but the cause of that was obvious in the little attention he had paid them in their youth.

In order to console the people under their sufferings, and to shut their eyes to the real depredations on the treasury, the ministers occasionally pressed the most extravagant measures of reform in the King's household, and even in his personal expenses.

Cardinal Fleury, who in truth had the merit of reëstablishing the finances, carried this system of economy so far as to obtain from the King the suppression of the household of the four younger Princesses. They were brought up as mere boarders in a convent eighty leagues distant from the Court. Saint Cyr would have been more suitable for the reception of the King's daughters; but probably the Cardinal shared some of those prejudices which will always attach to even the most useful institutions, and which, since the death of Louis XIV., had been raised against the noble establishment of Madame de Maintenon. Madame Louise often assured me that at twelve years of age she was not mistress of the whole alphabet, and never learnt to read fluently until after her return to Versailles.

Madame Victoire attributed certain paroxysms of terror, which she was never able to conquer, to the violent alarms she experienced at the Abbey of Fontevault, whenever she was sent, by way of penance, to pray alone in the vault where the sisters were interred.

A gardener belonging to the abbey died raving

mad. His habitation, without the walls, was near a chapel of the abbey, where Mesdames were taken to repeat the prayers for those in the agonies of death. Their prayers were more than once interrupted by the shrieks of the dying man.

When Mesdames, still very young, returned to Court, they enjoyed the friendship of Monseigneur the Dauphin, and profited by his advice. They devoted themselves ardently to study, and gave up almost the whole of their time to it; they enabled themselves to write French correctly, and acquired a good knowledge of history. Italian, English, the higher branches of mathematics, turning and dialling, filled up in succession their leisure moments. Madame Adélaïde, in particular, had a most insatiable desire to learn; she was taught to play upon all instruments, from the horn (will it be believed!) to the Jew's-harp.

Madame Adélaïde was graced for a short time with a charming figure; but never did beauty so quickly vanish. Madame Victoire was handsome and very graceful; her address, mien, and smile were in perfect accordance with the goodness of her heart. Madame Sophie was remarkably ugly; never did I behold a person with so unprepossessing an appearance; she walked with the greatest rapidity; and, in order to recognise the people who placed themselves along her path without looking at them, she

acquired the habit of leering on one side, like a hare. This Princess was so exceedingly diffident that a person might be with her daily for years together without hearing her utter a single word. It was asserted, however, that she displayed talent, and even amiability, in the society of some favourite ladies. She taught herself a great deal, but she studied alone; the presence of a reader would have disconcerted her very much. There were, however, occasions on which the Princess, generally so intractable, became all at once affable and condescending, and manifested the most communicative good-nature; this would happen during a storm; so great was her alarm on such an occasion that she then approached the most humble, and would ask them a thousand obliging questions; a flash of lightning made her squeeze their hands; a peal of thunder would drive her to embrace them, but with the return of the calm, the Princess resumed her stiffness, her reserve, and her repellent air, and passed all by without taking the slightest notice of any one, until a fresh storm restored to her at once her dread and her affability.

Mesdames found in a beloved brother, whose rare attainments are known to all Frenchmen, a guide in everything wanting to their education. In their august mother, Maria Leczinska, they possessed the noblest example of every pious and social virtue; that

Princess, by her eminent qualities and her modest dignity, veiled the failings of the King, and while she lived she preserved in the Court of Louis XV. that decorous and dignified tone which alone secures the respect due to power. The Princesses, her daughters, were worthy of her; and if a few degraded beings did aim the shafts of calumny at them, these shafts dropped harmless, warded off by the elevation of their sentiments and the purity of their conduct.

If Mesdames had not tasked themselves with numerous occupations, they would have been much to be pitied. They loved walking, but could enjoy nothing beyond the public gardens of Versailles; they would have cultivated flowers, but could have no others than those in their windows.

The Marquise de Durfort, since Duchesse de Civrac,¹ afforded to Madame Victoire agreeable society. The Princess spent almost all her evenings with that lady, and ended by fancying herself domiciled with her.

Madame de Narbonne had, in a similar way, taken pains to make her intimate acquaintance pleasant to Madame Adélaïde.

Madame Louise had for many years lived in great seclusion; I read to her five hours a day. My voice frequently betrayed the exhaustion of my lungs; the

¹ Grandmother of two heroes of La Vendée, Lescure and La Roche-Jaquelin, by the marriage of her eldest daughter with M. d'Onissan; and of the unfortunate Labédoyère, by the marriage of her second daughter with M. de Chastellux. — MADAME CAMPAN.

Princess would then prepare sugared water for me, place it by me, and apologise for making me read so long, on the score of having prescribed a course of reading for herself.

One evening, while I was reading, she was informed that M. Bertin, *ministre des parties casuelles*, desired to speak with her; she went out abruptly, returned, resumed her silks and embroidery, and made me resume my book; when I retired she commanded me to be in her closet the next morning at eleven o'clock. When I got there the Princess was gone out; I learnt that she had gone at seven in the morning to the Convent of the Carmelites of St. Denis, where she was desirous of taking the veil. I went to Madame Victoire; there I heard that the King alone had been acquainted with Madame Louise's project; that he had kept it faithfully secret, and that, having long previously opposed her wish, he had only on the preceding evening sent her his consent; that she had gone alone into the convent, where she was expected; and that a few minutes afterwards she had made her appearance at the grating, to show to the Princesse de Guistel, who had accompanied her to the convent gate, and to her equerry, the King's order to leave her in the monastery.

Upon receiving the intelligence of her sister's departure, Madame Adélaïde gave way to violent paroxysms of rage, and reproached the King bitterly for the

secret, which he had thought it his duty to preserve. Madame Victoire missed the society of her favourite sister, but she shed tears in silence only. The first time I saw this excellent Princess after Madame Louise's departure, I threw myself at her feet, kissed her hand, and asked her, with all the confidence of youth, whether she would quit us as Madame Louise had done. She raised me, embraced me, and said, pointing to the lounge upon which she was extended, "Make yourself easy, my dear; I shall never have Louise's courage. I love the conveniences of life too well; this lounge is my destruction." As soon as I obtained permission to do so, I went to St. Denis to see my late mistress; she deigned to receive me with her face uncovered, in her private parlour; she told me she had just left the wash-house, and that it was her turn that day to attend to the linen. "I much abused your youthful lungs for two years before the execution of my project," added she. "I knew that here I could read none but books tending to our salvation, and I wished to review all the historians that had interested me."

She informed me that the King's consent for her to go to St. Denis had been brought to her while I was reading; she prided herself, and with reason, upon having returned to her closet without the slightest mark of agitation, though she said she felt so keenly that she could scarcely regain her chair. She

added that moralists were right when they said that happiness does not dwell in palaces; that she had proved it; and that, if I desired to be happy, she advised me to come and enjoy a retreat in which the liveliest imagination might find full exercise in the contemplation of a better world. I had no palace, no earthly grandeur to sacrifice to God; nothing but the bosom of a united family; and it is precisely there that the moralists whom she cited have placed true happiness. I replied that, in private life, the absence of a beloved and cherished daughter would be too cruelly felt by her family. The Princess said no more on the subject.¹

The seclusion of Madame Louise was attributed to various motives; some were unkind enough to suppose it to have been occasioned by her mortification at

¹ "Les Souvenirs de Félicité" contain the account of a visit to St. Denis made by Madame de Genlis: "Madame Louise permitted questions, and answered them shortly but kindly. I wanted to know what in her new state she found the hardest to accustom herself to. 'You would never guess it,' answered she, smiling; 'it is to descend alone a back staircase. At first,' added she, 'it was to me the most fearful precipice. I was obliged to seat myself on the steps, and slide down in order to descend.' In fact, a princess who had only descended the grand marble staircase of Versailles, leaning on the arm of her *chevalier d'honneur*, and surrounded by her pages, would tremble at finding herself left alone on a steep spiral staircase. She knew long before all the austerities of the religious life. For ten years she had secretly practised most of them in the Château of Versailles, but she had never thought of small staircases. This may well cause reflection on the education, ridiculous on so many accounts, that persons of this rank generally receive, who, always followed, helped, escorted, prompted, guarded from their childhood, are thus deprived of the greatest part of the faculties that nature has given them."

being, in point of rank, the last of the Princesses. I think I penetrated the true cause. Her aspirations were lofty; she loved everything sublime; often while I was reading she would interrupt me to exclaim, "That is beautiful! that is noble!" There was but one brilliant action that she could perform,—to quit a palace for a cell, and rich garments for a stuff gown. She achieved it!

I saw Madame Louise two or three times more at the grating. I was informed of her death by Louis XVI. "My Aunt Louise," said he to me, "your old mistress, is just dead at St. Denis. I have this moment received intelligence of it. Her piety and resignation were admirable, and yet the delirium of my good aunt recalled to her recollection that she was a princess, for her last words were, 'To paradise, haste, haste, full speed.' No doubt she thought she was again giving orders to her equerry."¹

¹ The retirement of Madame Louise, and her removal from Court, had only served to give her up entirely to the intrigues of the clergy. She received incessant visits from bishops, archbishops, and ambitious priests of every rank; she prevailed on the King, her father, to grant many ecclesiastical preferments, and probably looked forward to playing an important part when the King, weary of his licentious course of life, should begin to think of religion. This, perhaps, might have been the case had not a sudden and unexpected death put an end to his career. The project of Madame Louise fell to the ground in consequence of this event. She remained in her convent, whence she continued to solicit favours, as I knew from the complaints of the Queen, who often said to me, "Here is another letter from my Aunt Louise. She is certainly the most intriguing little Carmelite in the kingdom." The Court went to visit her about three times a year, and I recollect that the Queen, intending to take her

Madame Victoire, good, sweet-tempered, and affable, lived with the most amiable simplicity in a society wherein she was much caressed; she was adored by her household. Without quitting Versailles, without sacrificing her easy chair, she fulfilled the duties of religion with punctuality, gave to the poor all she possessed, and strictly observed Lent and the fasts. The table of Mesdames acquired a reputation for dishes of abstinence, spread abroad by the assiduous parasites at that of their *maitre d'hôtel*. Madame Victoire was not indifferent to good living, but she had the most religious scruples respecting dishes of which it was allowable to partake at penitential times. I saw her one day exceedingly tormented by her doubts about a water-fowl, which was often served up to her during Lent. The question to be determined was, whether it was *maigre* or *gras*. She consulted a bishop, who happened to be of the party: the prelate immediately assumed the grave attitude of a judge who is about to pronounce sentence. He answered the Princess that, in a similar case of doubt, it had been resolved that after dressing the bird it should be pricked over a very cold silver dish; if the gravy of the animal congealed within a quarter of an hour, the creature was to be accounted flesh; but if the gravy remained in an oily

daughter there, ordered me to get a doll dressed like a Carmelite for her, that the young Princess might be accustomed, before she went into the convent, to the habit of her aunt, the nun. — MADAME CAMPAN.

state, it might be eaten without scruple. Madame Victoire immediately made the experiment: the gravy did not congeal; and this was a source of great joy to the Princess, who was very partial to that sort of game. The abstinence which so much occupied the attention of Madame Victoire was so disagreeable to her, that she listened with impatience for the midnight hour of Holy Saturday; and then she was immediately supplied with a good dish of fowl and rice, and sundry other succulent viands. She confessed with such amiable candour her taste for good cheer and the comforts of life, that it would have been necessary to be as severe in principle as insensible to the excellent qualities of the Princess, to consider it a crime in her.

Madame Adélaïde had more mind than Madame Victoire; but she was altogether deficient in that kindness which alone creates affection for the great, — abrupt manners, a harsh voice, and a short way of speaking, rendering her more than imposing. She carried the idea of the prerogative of rank to a high pitch. One of her chaplains was unlucky enough to say *Dominus vobiscum* with rather too easy an air; the Princess rated him soundly for it after mass, and told him to remember that he was not a bishop, and not again to think of officiating in the style of a prelate.

Mesdames lived quite separate from the King. Since the death of Madame de Pompadour he had

lived alone. The enemies of the Duc de Choiseul did not know in what department, nor through what channel, they could prepare and bring about the downfall of the man who stood in their way. The King was connected only with women of so low a class that they could not be made use of for any delicate intrigue ; moreover, the Parc-aux-Cerfs was a seraglio, the beauties of which were often replaced ; it was desirable to give the King a mistress who could form a circle, and in whose drawing-room the long-standing attachment of the King for the Duc de Choiseul might be overcome. It is true that Madame du Barry was selected from a class sufficiently low. Her origin, her education, her habits, and everything about her bore a character of vulgarity and shamelessness ; but by marrying her to a man whose pedigree dated from 1400, it was thought scandal would be avoided. The conqueror of Mahon conducted this coarse intrigue.¹ Such a mistress was judiciously selected for the diversion of the latter years of a man weary of grandeur, fatigued with pleasure, and cloyed with voluptuousness. Neither

¹ It appeared at this period as if every feeling of dignity was lost. "Few noblemen of the French Court," says a writer of the time, "preserved themselves from the general corruption. The Maréchal de Brissac was one of the latter. He was bantered on the strictness of his principles of honour and honesty ; it was thought strange that he should be offended by being thought, like so many others, exposed to hymeneal disgrace. Louis XV., who was present, and laughed at his angry fit, said to him : 'Come, M. de Brissac, don't be angry ; 'tis but a trifling evil ; take courage.' 'Sire,' replied M. de Brissac, 'I possess all kinds of courage, except that which can brave shame.'" — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

the wit, the talents, the graces of the Marquise de Pompadour, her beauty, nor even her love for the King, would have had any further influence over that worn-out being.

He wanted a Roxalana of familiar gaiety, without any respect for the dignity of the sovereign. Madame du Barry one day so far forgot propriety as to desire to be present at a Council of State. The King was weak enough to consent to it. There she remained ridiculously perched upon the arm of his chair, playing all sorts of childish monkey tricks, calculated to please an old sultan.

Another time she snatched a packet of sealed letters from the King's hand. Among them she had observed one from Comte de Broglie. She told the King that she knew that rascal Broglie spoke ill of her to him, and that for once, at least, she would make sure he should read nothing respecting her. The King wanted to get the packet again; she resisted, and made him run two or three times round the table, which was in the middle of the council-chamber, and then, on passing the fireplace, she threw the letters into the grate, where they were consumed. The King became furious; he seized his audacious mistress by the arm, and put her out of the door without speaking to her. Madame du Barry thought herself utterly disgraced; she returned home, and remained two hours, alone, abandoned to the utmost

distress. The King went to her; she threw herself at his feet, in tears, and he pardoned her.

Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau, the Duchesse de Choiseul, and the Duchesse de Grammont had renounced the honour of the King's intimate acquaintance rather than share it with Madame du Barry. But a few years after the death of Louis XV., Madame la Maréchale being alone at the Val, a house belonging to M. de Beauvau, Mademoiselle de Dillon saw the Countess's calash take shelter in the forest of St. Germain during a violent storm. She invited her in, and the Countess herself related these particulars, which I had from Madame de Beauvau.¹

The Comte du Barry, surnamed *le roué* (the profligate), and Mademoiselle du Barry² advised, or rather prompted, Madame du Barry in furtherance of the plans of the party of the Maréchal de Richelieu and the Duc d'Aiguillon. Sometimes they even set her

¹ Chamfort gives a different version of Madame du Barry's visit to the Val. "Madame du Barry," says he, "being at Vincennes, was curious to see the Val. Madame de Beauvau was amused at the idea of going there and doing the honours. She talked of what had happened under Louis XV. Madame du Barry was complaining of various matters, which appeared to show that she was personally detested. 'By no means,' said Madame de Beauvau; 'we aimed at nothing but your place.' After this frank confession Madame du Barry was asked if Louis XV. did not say a great deal against her (Madame de Beauvau) and Madame de Grammont. 'Oh! a great deal.' 'Well, and what of me, for instance?' 'Of you, madame? That you are haughty and intriguing, and that you lead your husband by the nose.' M. de Beauvau was present. The conversation was soon changed." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

² The Comte Jean du Barry and Mademoiselle Claire du Barry, brother-in-law and sister-in-law of Madame du Barry.

to act in such a way as to have a useful influence upon great political measures. Under pretence that the page who accompanied Charles I. in his flight was a Du Barry or Barrymore, they persuaded the Comtesse du Barry to buy in London that fine portrait which we now have in the Museum. She had the picture placed in her drawing-room, and when she saw the King hesitating upon the violent measure of breaking up his Parliament, and forming that which was called the Maupeou Parliament, she desired him to look at the portrait of a king who had given way to his Parliament.¹

¹ The "Memoirs of General Dumouriez," vol. i., page 142, contain some curious particulars about Madame Du Barry; and novel details respecting her will be found at page 243 of "Curiosités Historiques," by J. A. Le Roi (Paris, Plon, 1864). His investigations lead to the result that her real name was Jean Bécu, born, 19th August, 1743, at Vaucouleurs, the natural daughter of Anne Bécu, otherwise known as "Quantiny." Her mother afterwards married Nicolas Rancon. Comte Jean du Barry met her among the demi-monde, and succeeded, about 1767, and by the help of his friend Lebel, the *valet de chambre* of Louis XV., in introducing her to the King under the name of Mademoiselle l'Ange. To be formally mistress, a husband had to be found. The Comte Jean du Barry, already married himself, found no difficulty in getting his brother, Comte Guillaume, a poor officer of the marine troops, to accept the post of husband. In the marriage-contract, signed on 23d July, 1768, she was described as the daughter of Anne Bécu and of an imaginary first husband, "Sieur Jean Jacques Gomard de Vubernier," and three years were taken off her age. The marriage-contract was so drawn as to leave Madame du Barry entirely free from all control by her husband. The marriage was solemnised on 1st September, 1768, after which the nominal husband returned to Toulouse. Madame du Barry in later years provided for him; and in 1772, tired of his applications, she obtained an act of separation from him. He married later Jeanne Madeleine Lemoine, and died in 1811. Madame du Barry took care of her mother, who figured as Madame de Montrable. In all, she received from the King, M. Le Roi calculates, about twelve

The men of ambition who were labouring to overthrow the Duc de Choiseul strengthened themselves by their concentration at the house of the favourite, and succeeded in their project. The bigots, who never forgave that minister the suppression of the Jesuits, and who had always been hostile to a treaty of alliance with Austria, influenced the minds of Mesdames. The Duc de La Vauguyon, the young Dauphin's governor, infected them with the same prejudices.

Such was the state of the public mind when the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette arrived at the Court of Versailles, just at the moment when the party which brought her there was about to be overthrown.

Madame Adélaïde openly avowed her dislike to a princess of the House of Austria; and when M. Campan, my father-in-law, went to receive his orders, at

and a half millions of livres. On the death of Louis XV. she had to retire first to the Abbey of Pont-aux-Dames, near Meaux, then she was allowed to go to her small house at St. Vrain, near Arpajon, and, finally, in 1775, to her château at Louveciennes. Much to her credit be it said, she retained many of her friends, and was on the most intimate terms till his death with the Duc de Brissac (Louis Hercule Timoléon de Cossé-Brissac), who was killed at Versailles in the massacre of the prisoners in September, 1792, leaving at his death a large legacy to her. Even the Emperor Joseph visited her. In 1791 many of her jewels were stolen and taken to England. This caused her to make several visits to that country, where she gained her suit. But these visits, though she took every precaution to legalise them, ruined her. Betrayed by her servants, among them by Zamor, the negro page, she was brought before the Revolutionary tribunal, and was guillotined on 8th December, 1793, in a frenzy of terror, calling for mercy and for delay up to the moment when her head fell.

the moment of setting off with the household of the Dauphiness, to go and receive the Archduchess upon the frontiers, she said she disapproved of the marriage of her nephew with an archduchess;¹ and that, if she had the direction of the matter, she would not send for an Austrian.

¹It is said that the Commander of the Faithful, on receiving the decree of the Convention which ordained the abolition of royalty in France, could not help saying, "At least the Republic will not marry an archduchess."

CHAPTER II.

Birth of Marie Antoinette Attended by a Memorable Calamity.— Maria Theresa's Character.— Education of the Archduchesses.— Preceptors Provided for Marie Antoinette by the Court of Vienna.— Preceptor Sent Her by the Court of France.— Abbé de Vermond.— Change in the French Ministry.— Cardinal de Rohan Succeeds Baron de Breteuil as Ambassador at Vienna.— Portrait of That Prelate.

MARIE ANTOINETTE JOSEPHE JEANNE DE LORRAINE, Archduchess of Austria, daughter of François de Lorraine and of Maria Theresa, was born on the 2d of November, 1755, the day of the earthquake at Lisbon; and this catastrophe, which appeared to stamp the era of her birth with a fatal mark, without forming a motive for superstitious fear with the Princess, nevertheless made an impression upon her mind. As the Empress already had a great number of daughters, she ardently desired to have another son, and playfully wagered against her wish with the Duc de Tarouka, who had insisted that she would give birth to an archduke. He lost by the birth of the Princess, and had executed in porcelain a figure with one knee bent on the earth, and presenting tablets,

upon which the following lines by Metastasio were engraved :

*I lose by your fair daughter's birth
Who prophesied a son ;
But if she share her mother's worth,
Why, all the world has won !*

The Queen was fond of talking of the first years of her youth. Her father, the Emperor Francis, had made a deep impression upon her heart ; she lost him when she was scarcely seven years old. One of those circumstances which fix themselves strongly in the memories of children frequently recalled his last caresses to her. The Emperor was setting out for Innspruck ; he had already left his palace, when he ordered a gentleman to fetch the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, and bring her to his carriage. When she came, he stretched out his arms to receive her, and said, after having pressed her to his bosom, " I wanted to embrace this child once more." The Emperor died suddenly during the journey, and never saw his beloved daughter again.

The Queen often spoke of her mother, and with profound respect, but she based all her schemes for the education of her children on the essentials which had been neglected in her own. Maria Theresa, who inspired awe by her great qualities, taught the Archduchesses to fear and respect rather than to love her ; at least I observed this in the Queen's feelings

towards her august mother. She therefore never desired to place between her own children and herself that distance which had existed in the imperial family. She cited a fatal consequence of it, which had made such a powerful impression upon her that time had never been able to efface it.

The wife of the Emperor Joseph II. was taken from him in a few days by an attack of smallpox of the most virulent kind. Her coffin had recently been deposited in the vault of the imperial family. The Archduchess Josepha, who had been betrothed to the King of Naples, at the instant she was quitting Vienna received an order from the Empress not to set off without having offered up a prayer in the vault of her forefathers. The Archduchess, persuaded that she should take the disorder to which her sister-in-law had just fallen a victim, looked upon this order as her death-warrant. She loved the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette tenderly; she took her upon her knees, embraced her with tears, and told her she was about to leave her, not for Naples, but never to see her again; that she was going down then to the tomb of her ancestors, and that she should shortly go again there to remain. Her anticipation was realised; confluent smallpox carried her off in a very few days, and her youngest sister ascended the throne of Naples in her place.

The Empress was too much taken up with high

political interests to have it in her power to devote herself to maternal attentions. The celebrated Wansvietten, her physician, went daily to visit the young imperial family, and afterwards to Maria Theresa, and gave the most minute details respecting the health of the Archdukes and Archduchesses, whom she herself sometimes did not see for eight or ten days at a time. As soon as the arrival of a stranger of rank at Vienna was made known, the Empress brought her family about her, admitted them to her table, and by this concerted meeting induced a belief that she herself presided over the education of her children.

The chief governesses, being under no fear of inspection from Maria Theresa, aimed at making themselves beloved by their pupils by the common and blamable practice of indulgence, so fatal to the future progress and happiness of children. Marie Antoinette was the cause of her governess being dismissed, through a confession that all her copies and all her letters were invariably first traced out with pencil; the Comtesse de Brandès was appointed to succeed her, and fulfilled her duties with great exactness and talent. The Queen looked upon having been confided to her care so late as a misfortune, and always continued upon terms of friendship with that lady. The education of Marie Antoinette was certainly very much neglected. With the exception of the Italian

language, all that related to *belles lettres*, and particularly to history, even that of her own country, was almost entirely unknown to her. This was soon found out at the Court of France, and thence arose the generally received opinion that she was deficient in sense. It will be seen in the course of these "Memoirs" whether that opinion was well or ill founded. The public prints, however, teemed with assertions of the superior talents of Maria Theresa's children. They often noticed the answers which the young Princesses gave in Latin to the harangues addressed to them; they uttered them, it is true, but without understanding them; they knew not a single word of that language.

Mention was one day made to the Queen of a drawing made by her, and presented by the Empress to M. Gérard, chief clerk of Foreign Affairs, on the occasion of his going to Vienna to draw up the articles for her marriage-contract. "I should blush," said she, "if that proof of the quackery of my education were shown to me. I do not believe that I ever put a pencil to that drawing." However, what had been taught her she knew perfectly well. Her facility of learning was inconceivable, and if all her teachers had been as well informed and as faithful to their duty as the Abbé Metastasio, who taught her Italian, she would have attained as great a superiority in the other branches of her education. The Queen spoke

that language with grace and ease, and translated the most difficult poets. She did not write French correctly, but she spoke it with the greatest fluency, and even affected to say that she had lost German. In fact she attempted in 1787 to learn her mother-tongue, and took lessons assiduously for six weeks; she was obliged to relinquish them, finding all the difficulties which a Frenchwoman, who should take up the study too late, would have to encounter. In the same manner she gave up English, which I had taught her for some time, and in which she had made rapid progress. Music was the accomplishment in which the Queen most delighted. She did not play well on any instrument, but she had become able to read at sight like a first-rate professor. She attained this degree of perfection in France, this branch of her education having been neglected at Vienna as much as the rest. A few days after her arrival at Versailles, she was introduced to her singing-master, La Garde, author of the opera of "Eglé." She made a distant appointment with him, needing, as she said, rest after the fatigues of the journey and the numerous fêtes which had taken place at Versailles; but her motive was her desire to conceal how ignorant she was of the rudiments of music. She asked M. Campan whether his son, who was a good musician, could give her lessons secretly for three months. "The Dauphiness," added she, smiling, "must be

careful of the reputation of the Archduchess." The lessons were given privately, and at the end of three months of constant application she sent for M. la Garde, and surprised him by her skill.

The desire to perfect Marie Antoinette in the study of the French language was probably the motive which determined Maria Theresa to provide for her as teachers two French actors: Aufresne, for pronunciation and declamation, and Sainville, for taste in French singing; the latter had been an officer in France, and bore a bad character. The choice gave just umbrage to our Court. The Marquis de Durfort, at that time ambassador at Vienna, was ordered to make a representation to the Empress upon her selection. The two actors were dismissed, and the Princess required that an ecclesiastic should be sent to her. Several eminent ecclesiastics declined taking upon themselves so delicate an office; others who were pointed out by Maria Theresa (among the rest the Abbé Grisel) belonged to parties which sufficed to exclude them.

The Archbishop of Toulouse¹ one day went to the Duc de Choiseul at the moment when he was much embarrassed upon the subject of this nomination; he proposed to him the Abbé de Vermond, librarian of the Collège des Quatre Nations. The eulogistic manner in which he spoke of his *protégé* procured the

¹ Étienne de Loménie, Comte de Brienne (1727-1794), afterwards Archbishop of Sens.

appointment for the latter on that very day ; and the gratitude of the Abbé de Vermond towards the prelate was very fatal to France, inasmuch as after seventeen years of persevering attempts to bring him into the ministry, he succeeded at last in getting him named Comptroller-General and President of the Council.

This Abbé de Vermond directed almost all the Queen's actions. He established his influence over her at an age when impressions are most durable ; and it was easy to see that he had taken pains only to render himself beloved by his pupil, and had troubled himself very little with the care of instructing her. He might have even been accused of having, by a sharp-sighted though culpable policy, purposely left her in ignorance. Marie Antoinette spoke the French language with much grace, but wrote it less perfectly. The Abbé de Vermond revised all the letters which she sent to Vienna. The insupportable folly with which he boasted of it displayed the character of a man more flattered at being admitted into her intimate secrets than anxious to fulfil worthily the high office of her preceptor.¹

¹ The Abbé de Vermond encouraged the impatience of etiquette shown by Marie Antoinette while she was Dauphiness. When she became Queen he endeavoured openly to induce her to shake off the restraints she still respected. If he chanced to enter her apartment at the time she was preparing to go out, "For whom," he would say, in a tone of raillery, "is this detachment of warriors which I found in the court ? Is it some gen-

His pride received its birth at Vienna, where Maria Theresa, as much to give him authority with the Archduchess as to make herself acquainted with his character, permitted him to mix every evening with the private circle of her family, into which the future Dauphiness had been admitted for some time. Joseph II., the elder Archduchess, and a few noblemen honoured by the confidence of Maria Theresa, composed the party; and reflections on the world, on courts, and the duties of princes were the usual topics of conversation. The Abbé de Vermond, in relating these particulars, confessed the means which he had made use of to gain admission into this private circle. The Empress, meeting him at the Archduchess's, asked him if he had formed any connections in Vienna. "None, Madame," replied he; "the apartment of the Archduchess and the hôtel of the ambassador of France are the only places which the man honoured with the care of the Princess's education should frequent." A month afterwards Maria Theresa, through a habit common enough among sovereigns, asked him the same

eral going to inspect his army? Does all this military display become a young Queen adored by her subjects?" He would call to her mind the simplicity with which Maria Theresa lived; the visits she made without guards, or even attendants, to the Prince d'Esterhazy, to the Comte de Palfi, passing whole days far from the fatiguing ceremonies of the Court. The Abbé thus artfully flattered the inclinations of Marie Antoinette, and showed her how she might disguise, even from herself, her aversion for the ceremonies observed by the descendants of Louis XIV. — MADAME CAMPAN.

question, and received precisely the same answer. The next day he received an order to join the imperial family every evening.

It is extremely probable, from the constant and well-known intercourse between this man and Comte de Mercy, ambassador of the Empire during the whole reign of Louis XVI., that he was useful to the Court of Vienna,¹ and that he often caused the Queen to decide on measures, the consequences of which she did not consider. Not of high birth,² imbued with all the principles of the modern philosophy, and yet holding to the hierarchy of the Church more tenaciously than any other ecclesiastic; vain, talkative, and at the same time cunning and abrupt; very ugly and affecting singularity; treating the most exalted persons as his equals, sometimes even as his inferiors, the Abbé de Vermond received ministers and bishops when in his bath; but said at the same time that Cardinal Dubois was a fool; that a man such as he, having obtained power, ought to make cardinals, and refuse to be one himself.

Intoxicated with the reception he had met with at

¹ A person who had dined with the Abbé one day at the Comte de Mercy's said to that ambassador, "How can you bear that tiresome babler?" "How can you ask it?" replied M. de Mercy; "you could answer the question yourself: it is because I want him." — MADAME CAMPAN.

² The Abbé de Vermond was the son of a village surgeon, and brother of an accoucheur, who had acted in that capacity for the Queen; when he was with her Majesty, in speaking to his brother, he never addressed him otherwise than as Monsieur l'Accoucheur. — MADAME CAMPAN.

the Court of Vienna, and having till then seen nothing of high life, the Abbé de Vermond admired no other customs than those of the imperial family; he ridiculed the etiquette of the House of Bourbon incessantly; the young Dauphiness was constantly incited by his sarcasms to get rid of it, and it was he who first induced her to suppress an infinity of practices of which he could discern neither the prudence nor the political aim. Such is the faithful portrait of that man whom the evil star of Marie Antoinette had reserved to guide her first steps upon a stage so conspicuous and so full of danger as that of the Court of Versailles.

It will be thought, perhaps, that I draw the character of the Abbé de Vermond too unfavourably; but how can I view with any complacency one who, after having arrogated to himself the office of confidant and sole counsellor of the Queen, guided her with so little prudence, and gave us the mortification of seeing that Princess blend, with qualities which charmed all that surrounded her, errors alike injurious to her glory and her happiness?

While M. de Choiseul, satisfied with the person whom M. de Brienne had presented, despatched him to Vienna with every eulogium calculated to inspire unbounded confidence, the Marquis de Durfort sent off a hairdresser and a few French fashions; and then it was thought sufficient pains had been taken to form

the character of a princess destined to share the throne of France.

The marriage of Monseigneur the Dauphin with the Archduchess was determined upon during the administration of the Duc de Choiseul. The Marquis de Durfort, who was to succeed the Baron de Breteuil in the embassy to Vienna, was appointed proxy for the marriage ceremony; but six months after the Dauphin's marriage the Duc de Choiseul was disgraced, and Madame de Marsan and Madame de Guéménée, who grew more powerful through the Duke's disgrace, conferred that embassy upon Prince Louis de Rohan, afterwards cardinal and grand almoner.

Hence it will be seen that the *Gazette de France* is a sufficient answer to those libellers who dared to assert that the young Archduchess was acquainted with the Cardinal de Rohan before the period of her marriage. A worse selection in itself, or one more disagreeable to Maria Theresa, than that which sent to her, in quality of ambassador, a man so frivolous and so immoral as Prince Louis de Rohan, could not have been made. He possessed but superficial knowledge upon any subject, and was totally ignorant of diplomatic affairs. His reputation had gone before him to Vienna, and his mission opened under the most unfavourable auspices. In want of money, and the House of Rohan being unable to make him any considerable advances, he obtained from his Court a

patent which authorised him to borrow the sum of 600,000 livres upon his benefices, ran in debt above a million, and thought to dazzle the city and Court of Vienna by the most indecent and ill-judged extravagance. He formed a suite of eight or ten gentlemen, of names sufficiently high-sounding; twelve pages equally well born, a crowd of officers and servants, a company of chamber musicians, etc. But this idle pomp did not last; embarrassment and distress soon showed themselves; his people, no longer receiving pay, in order to make money, abused the privileges of ambassadors, and smuggled¹ with so much effrontery that Maria Theresa, to put a stop to it without offending the Court of France, was compelled to suppress the privileges in this respect of all the diplomatic bodies, — a step which rendered the person and conduct of Prince Louis odious in every foreign Court. He seldom obtained private audiences from the Empress, who did not esteem him, and who expressed herself without reserve upon his conduct both as a bishop and as an ambassador. He thought to obtain favour by assisting to effect the marriage of the Archduchess Elizabeth, the elder sister of Marie Antoinette, with Louis XV., an affair which was awkwardly undertaken, and of which Madame du Barry had

¹ I have often heard the Queen say that, at Vienna, in the office of the secretary of the Prince de Rohan, there were sold in one year more silk stockings than at Lyons and Paris together. — MADAME CAMPAN.

no difficulty in causing the failure. I have deemed it my duty to omit no particular of the moral and political character of a man whose existence was subsequently so injurious to the reputation of Marie Antoinette.

CHAPTER III.

Arrival of the Archduchess in France.—Brilliant Reception of the Dauphiness at Versailles.—She Charms Louis XV.—Madame du Barry's Jealousy.—Court Intrigues.—The Dauphin.—His Brothers and Their Wives.

A SUPERB pavilion had been prepared upon the frontier near Kehl. It consisted of a vast *salon*, connected with two apartments, one of which was assigned to the lords and ladies of the Court of Vienna, and the other to the suite of the Dauphiness, composed of the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour; the Duchesse de Cossé, her *dame d'atours*; four ladies of the palace; the Comte de Saulx-Tavannes, *chevalier d'honneur*; the Comte de Tessé, first equerry; the Bishop of Chartres, first almoner; the officers of the Body Guard, and the equerries.

When the Dauphiness had been entirely undressed, in order that she might retain nothing belonging to a foreign Court (an etiquette always observed on such an occasion), the doors were opened; the young Princess came forward, looking round for the Comtesse de Noailles; then, rushing into her arms, she implored her, with tears in her eyes, and with heartfelt sincerity, to be her guide and support.

While doing justice to the virtues of the Comtesse de Noailles, those sincerely attached to the Queen have always considered it as one of her earliest misfortunes not to have found, in the person of her adviser, a woman indulgent, enlightened, and administering good advice with that amiability which disposes young persons to follow it. The Comtesse de Noailles had nothing agreeable in her appearance; her demeanour was stiff and her mien severe. She was perfect mistress of etiquette; but she wearied the young Princess with it, without making her sensible of its importance. It would have been sufficient to represent to the Dauphiness that in France her dignity depended much upon customs not necessary at Vienna to secure the respect and love of the good and submissive Austrians for the imperial family; but the Dauphiness was perpetually tormented by the remonstrances of the Comtesse de Noailles, and at the same time was led by the Abbé de Vermond to ridicule both the lessons upon etiquette and her who gave them. She preferred raillery to argument, and nicknamed the Comtesse de Noailles *Madame l'Etiquette*.

The fêtes which were given at Versailles on the marriage of the Dauphin were very splendid. The Dauphiness arrived there at the hour for her toilet, having slept at La Muette, where Louis XV. had been to receive her; and where that Prince, blinded by a feeling unworthy of a sovereign and the father

of a family, caused the young Princess, the royal family, and the ladies of the Court, to sit down to supper with Madame du Barry.

The Dauphiness was hurt at this conduct; she spoke of it openly enough to those with whom she was intimate, but she knew how to conceal her dissatisfaction in public, and her behaviour showed no signs of it.¹

She was received at Versailles in an apartment on the ground floor, under that of the late Queen, which was not ready for her until six months after her marriage.

The Dauphiness, then fifteen years of age, beaming with freshness, appeared to all eyes more than beautiful. Her walk partook at once of the dignity of the Princesses of her house, and of the grace of the French; her eyes were mild, her smile amiable. When she went to chapel, as soon as she had taken the first few steps in the long gallery, she discerned, all the way to its extremity, those persons whom she ought to salute with the consideration due to their rank; those on whom she should bestow an inclination of the head; and lastly, those who were to be satisfied with a smile, calculated to console them for not being entitled to greater honours.

Louis XV. was enchanted with the young Dauphin-

¹ See the "*Mémoires de Weber*," tome i. The memoirs of this writer, the foster-brother of Marie Antoinette, are worthy of attention.

ess; all his conversation was about her graces, her vivacity, and the aptness of her repartees. She was yet more successful with the royal family when they beheld her shorn of the splendour of the diamonds with which she had been adorned during the first days of her marriage. When clothed in a light dress of gauze or taffety she was compared to the Venus dei Medici, and the Atalanta of the Marly Gardens. Poets sang her charms; painters attempted to copy her features. One artist's fancy led him to place the portrait of Marie Antoinette in the heart of a full-blown rose. His ingenious idea was rewarded by Louis XV.

The King continued to talk only of the Dauphiness; and Madame du Barry ill-naturedly endeavoured to damp his enthusiasm. Whenever Marie Antoinette was the topic, she pointed out the irregularity of her features, criticised the *bons mots* quoted as hers, and rallied the King upon his prepossession in her favour. Madame du Barry was affronted at not receiving from the Dauphiness those attentions to which she thought herself entitled; she did not conceal her vexation from the King; she was afraid that the grace and cheerfulness of the young Princess would make the domestic circle of the royal family more agreeable to the old sovereign, and that he would escape her chains; at the same time, hatred to the Choiseul party contributed powerfully to excite the enmity of the favourite.

The fall of that minister took place in November, 1770, six months after his long influence in the Council had brought about the alliance with the House of Austria and the arrival of Marie Antoinette at the Court of France. The Princess, young, frank, volatile, and inexperienced, found herself without any other guide than the Abbé de Vermond, in a Court ruled by the enemy of the minister who had brought her there, and in the midst of people who hated Austria, and detested any alliance with the imperial house.

The Duc d'Aiguillon, the Duc de La Vauguyon, the Maréchal de Richelieu, the Rohans, and other considerable families, who had made use of Madame du Barry to overthrow the Duke, could not flatter themselves, notwithstanding their powerful intrigues, with a hope of being able to break off an alliance solemnly announced, and involving such high political interests. They therefore changed their mode of attack, and it will be seen how the conduct of the Dauphin served as a basis for their hopes.

The Dauphiness continually gave proofs of both sense and feeling. Sometimes she even suffered herself to be carried away by those transports of compassionate kindness which are not to be controlled by the customs which rank establishes.

In consequence of the fire in the Place Louis XV., which occurred at the time of the nuptial entertainments, the Dauphin and Dauphiness sent their whole

income for the year to the relief of the unfortunate families who lost their relatives on that disastrous day.

This was one of those ostentatious acts of generosity which are dictated by the policy of princes, at least as much as by their compassion; but the grief of Marie Antoinette was profound, and lasted several days; nothing could console her for the loss of so many innocent victims; she spoke of it, weeping, to her ladies, one of whom, thinking, no doubt, to divert her mind, told her that a great number of thieves had been found among the bodies, and that their pockets were filled with watches and other valuables. "They have at least been well punished," added the person who related these particulars. "Oh, no, no, madame!" replied the Dauphiness; "they died by the side of honest people."

The Dauphiness had brought from Vienna a considerable number of white diamonds; the King added to them the gift of the diamonds and pearls of the late Dauphiness, and also put into her hands a collar of pearls, of a single row, the smallest of which was as large as a filbert, and which had been brought into France by Anne of Austria, and appropriated by that Princess to the use of the Queens and Dauphinesses of France.¹

¹ I mention this collar thus particularly because the Queen thought it her duty, notwithstanding this appropriation, to give it up to the commissaries of the National Assembly when they came to strip the King and Queen of the crown diamonds. — MADAME CAMPAN.

The three Princesses, daughters of Louis XV., joined in making her magnificent presents. Madame Adélaïde at the same time gave the young Princess a key to the private corridors of the Château, by means of which, without any suite, and without being perceived, she could get to the apartments of her aunts, and see them in private. The Dauphiness, on receiving the key, told them, with infinite grace, that if they had meant to make her appreciate the superb presents they were kind enough to bestow upon her, they should not at the same time have offered her one of such inestimable value; since to that key she should be indebted for an intimacy and advice unspeakably precious at her age. She did, indeed, make use of it very frequently; but Madame Victoire alone permitted her, so long as she continued Dauphiness, to visit her familiarly. Madame Adélaïde could not overcome her prejudices against Austrian princesses, and was wearied with the somewhat petulant gaiety of the Dauphiness. Madame Victoire was concerned at this, feeling that their society and counsel would have been highly useful to a young person otherwise likely to meet with none but sycophants. She endeavoured, therefore, to induce her to take pleasure in the society of the Marquise de Durfort, her lady of honour and favourite. Several agreeable entertainments took place at the house of this lady, but the Comtesse de Noailles

and the Abbé de Vermond soon opposed these meetings.

A circumstance which happened in hunting, near the village of Acheres, in the forest of Fontainebleau, afforded the young Princess an opportunity of displaying her respect for old age, and her compassion for misfortunè. An aged peasant was wounded by the stag; the Dauphiness jumped out of her calash, placed the peasant, with his wife and children, in it, had the family taken back to their cottage, and bestowed upon them every attention and every necessary assistance. Her heart was always open to the feelings of compassion, and the recollection of her rank never restrained her sensibility. Several persons in her service entered her room one evening, expecting to find nobody there but the officer in waiting; they perceived the young Princess seated by the side of this man, who was advanced in years; she had placed near him a bowl full of water, was stanching the blood which issued from a wound he had received in his hand with her handkerchief, which she had torn up to bind it, and was fulfilling towards him all the duties of a pious sister of charity. The old man, affected even to tears, out of respect allowed his august mistress to act as she thought proper. He had hurt himself in endeavouring to move a rather heavy piece of furniture at the Princess's request.

In the month of July, 1770, an unfortunate occurrence that took place in a family which the Dauphiness honoured with her favour contributed again to show not only her sensibility but also the benevolence of her disposition. One of her women in waiting had a son who was an officer in the *gens d'armes* of the guard; this young man thought himself affronted by a clerk in the War Department, and imprudently sent him a challenge; he killed his adversary in the forest of Compiègne. The family of the young man who was killed, being in possession of the challenge, demanded justice. The King, distressed on account of several duels which had recently taken place, had unfortunately declared that he would show no mercy on the first event of that kind which could be proved; the culprit was therefore arrested. His mother, in the deepest grief, hastened to throw herself at the feet of the Dauphiness, the Dauphin, and the young Princesses. After an hour's supplication they obtained from the King the favour so much desired. On the next day a lady of rank, while congratulating the Dauphiness, had the malice to add that the mother had neglected no means of success on the occasion, having solicited not only the royal family, but even Madame du Barry. The Dauphiness replied that the fact justified the favourable opinion she had formed of the worthy woman; that the heart of a mother should hesitate at nothing

for the salvation of her son; and that in her place, if she had thought it would be serviceable, she would have thrown herself at the feet of Zamor.¹

Some time after the marriage entertainments the Dauphiness made her entry into Paris, and was received with transports of joy. After dining in the King's apartment at the Tuileries, she was forced, by the reiterated shouts of the multitude, with whom the garden was filled, to present herself upon the balcony fronting the principal walk. On seeing such a crowd of heads with their eyes fixed upon her, she exclaimed, "*Grand Dieu!* what a concourse!" "Madame," said the old Duc de Brissac, the Governor of Paris, "I may tell you, without fear of offending the Dauphin, that they are so many lovers."² The Dauphin took no umbrage at either acclamations or marks of homage of which the Dauphiness was the object. The most mortifying indifference, a coldness which frequently degenerated into rudeness, were the sole feelings which the young Prince then manifested towards her. Not all her charms could gain even upon his senses. This estrangement, which lasted

¹ A little Indian who carried the Comtesse du Barry's train. Louis XV. often amused himself with the little marmoset, and jestingly made him Governor of Louveciennes; he received an annual income of 3,000 francs. — MADAME CAMPAN.

² At the Court of Louis XV. and XVI., he was a model of the gallantry and courage of the ancient knights. The Comte de Charolais, finding him one day with his mistress, said to him abruptly, "Go out, monsieur." "Monseigneur," replied the Duc de Brissac, with emphasis, "your ancestors would have said, 'Come out.'" — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

a long time, was said to be the work of the Duc de La Vauguyon. The Dauphiness, in fact, had no sincere friends at Court except the Duc de Choiseul and his party. Will it be credited that the plans laid against Marie Antoinette went so far as divorce? I have been assured of it by persons holding high situations at Court, and many circumstances tend to confirm the opinion. On the journey to Fontainebleau, in the year of the marriage, the inspectors of public buildings were gained over to manage so that the apartment intended for the Dauphin, communicating with that of the Dauphiness, should not be finished, and a room at the extremity of the building was temporarily assigned to him. The Dauphiness, aware that this was the result of intrigue, had the courage to complain of it to Louis XV., who, after severe reprimands, gave orders so positive that within the week the apartment was ready. Every method was tried to continue or augment the indifference which the Dauphin long manifested towards his youthful spouse. She was deeply hurt at it, but she never suffered herself to utter the slightest complaint on the subject. Inattention to, even contempt for, the charms which she heard extolled on all sides, nothing induced her to break silence; and some tears, which would involuntarily burst from her eyes, were the sole symptoms of her inward sufferings discoverable by those in her service.

Once only, when tired out with the misplaced remonstrances of an old lady attached to her person, who wished to dissuade her from riding on horseback, under the impression that it would prevent her producing heirs to the crown, "Mademoiselle," said she, "in God's name, leave me in peace; be assured that I can put no heir in danger."

The Dauphiness found at the Court of Louis XV., besides the three Princesses, the King's daughters, the Princes also, brothers of the Dauphin, who were receiving their education, and Clotilde and Elisabeth, still in the care of Madame de Marsan, governess of the children of France. The elder of the two latter Princesses, in 1777, married the Prince of Piedmont, afterwards King of Sardinia. This Princess was in her infancy so extremely large that the people nicknamed her *gros Madame*.¹ The second Princess was the pious Elisabeth, the victim of her respect and tender attachment for the King, her brother. She was still scarcely out of her leading-strings at the period of the Dauphin's

¹ Madame Clotilde of France, a sister of the King, was extraordinarily fat for her height and age. One of her playfellows, having been indiscreet enough even in her presence to make use of the nickname given to her, received a severe reprimand from the Comtesse de Marsan, who hinted to her that she would do well in not making her appearance again before the Princess. Madame Clotilde sent for her the next day: "My governess," said she, "has done her duty, and I will do mine; come and see me as usual, and think no more of a piece of inadvertence, which I myself have forgotten." This Princess, so heavy in body, possessed the most agreeable and playful wit. Her affability and grace rendered her dear to all who came near her. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

marriage. The Dauphiness showed her marked preference. The governess, who sought to advance the Princess to whom nature had been least favourable, was offended at the Dauphiness's partiality for Madame Elisabeth, and by her injudicious complaints weakened the friendship which yet subsisted between Madame Clotilde and Marie Antoinette. There even arose some degree of rivalry on the subject of education; and that which the Empress Maria Theresa bestowed on her daughters was talked of openly and unfavourably enough. The Abbé de Vermond thought himself affronted, took a part in the quarrel, and added his complaints and jokes to those of the Dauphiness on the criticisms of the governess; he even indulged himself in his turn in reflections on the tuition of Madame Clotilde. Everything becomes known at Court. Madame de Marsan was informed of all that had been said in the Dauphiness's circle, and was very angry with her on account of it.

From that moment a centre of intrigue, or rather gossip, against Marie Antoinette was established round Madame de Marsan's fireside; her most trifling actions were there construed ill; her gaiety, and the harmless amusements in which she sometimes indulged in her own apartments with the more youthful ladies of her train, and even with the women in her service, were stigmatised as criminal. Prince Louis de Rohan, sent through the influence of this clique ambassador to

Vienna, was the echo there of these unmerited comments, and threw himself into a series of culpable accusations which he proffered under the guise of zeal. He ceaselessly represented the young Dauphiness as alienating all hearts by levities unsuitable to the dignity of the French Court. The Princess frequently received from the Court of Vienna remonstrances, of the origin of which she could not long remain in ignorance. From this period must be dated that aversion which she never ceased to manifest for the Prince de Rohan.

About the same time the Dauphiness received information of a letter written by Prince Louis to the Duc d'Aiguillon, in which the ambassador expressed himself in very free language respecting the intentions of Maria Theresa with relation to the partition of Poland. This letter of Prince Louis had been read at the Comtesse du Barry's; the levity of the ambassador's correspondence wounded the feelings and the dignity of the Dauphiness at Versailles, while at Vienna the representations which he made to Maria Theresa against the young Princess terminated in rendering the motives of his incessant complaints suspected by the Empress.

Maria Theresa at length determined on sending her private secretary, Baron de Neni, to Versailles, with directions to observe the conduct of the Dauphiness with attention, and form a just estimate of the opin-

ion of the Court and of Paris with regard to that Princess. The Baron de Neni, after having devoted sufficient time and intelligence to the subject, undeceived his sovereign as to the exaggerations of the French ambassador; and the Empress had no difficulty in detecting, among the calumnies which he had conveyed to her under the specious excuse of anxiety for her august daughter, proofs of the enmity of a party which had never approved of the alliance of the House of Bourbon with her own.¹

At this period the Dauphiness, though unable to obtain any influence over the heart of her husband, dreading Louis XV., and justly mistrusting everything connected with Madame du Barry and the Duc d'Aiguillon, had not deserved the slightest reproach for that sort of levity which hatred and her misfortunes afterwards construed into crime. The Empress, convinced of the innocence of Marie Antoinette, directed the Baron de Neni to solicit the recall of the Prince de Rohan, and to inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs of all the motives which made her require it; but the House of Rohan interposed between its *protégé* and the Austrian envoy, and an evasive answer merely was given.

It was not until two months after the death of

¹ Maria Theresa knew very well which of the persons who composed the Court of Louis XV. were favourable to Marie Antoinette. It is said that at the moment of her departure for France the Empress gave her a confidential list of such persons. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Louis XV. that the Court of Vienna obtained his recall. The avowed grounds for requiring it were, first, the public gallantries of Prince Louis with some ladies of the Court and others ; secondly, his surliness and haughtiness towards other foreign ministers, which would have had more serious consequences, especially with the ministers of England and Denmark, if the Empress herself had not interfered ; thirdly, his contempt for religion in a country where it was particularly necessary to show respect for it. He had been seen frequently to dress himself in clothes of different colours, assuming the hunting uniforms of various noblemen whom he visited, with so much audacity that one day in particular, during the *Fête Dieu*, he and all his legation, in green uniforms laced with gold, broke through a procession which impeded them, in order to make their way to a hunting party at the Prince de Paar's ; and fourthly, the immense debts contracted by him and his people, which were tardily and only in part discharged.

The succeeding marriages of the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois with two daughters of the King of Sardinia procured society for the Dauphiness more suitable to her age, and altered her mode of life.

A pair of tolerably fine eyes drew forth, in favour of the Comtesse de Provence, upon her arrival at Ver-

sailles, the only praises which could reasonably be bestowed upon her. The Comtesse d'Artois, though not deformed, was very small; she had a fine complexion; her face, tolerably pleasing, was not remarkable for anything except the extreme length of the nose. But being good and generous, she was beloved by those about her, and even possessed some influence so long as she was the only Princess who had produced heirs to the crown.

From this time the closest intimacy subsisted between the three young families. They took their meals together, except on those days when they dined in public. This manner of living *en famille* continued until the Queen sometimes indulged herself in going to dine with the Duchesse de Polignac, when she was governess; but the evening meetings at supper were never interrupted; they took place at the house of the Comtesse de Provence. Madame Elisabeth made one of the party when she had finished her education, and sometimes Mesdames, the King's aunts, were invited. The custom, which had no precedent at Court, was the work of Marie Antoinette, and she maintained it with the utmost perseverance.

The Court of Versailles saw no change in point of etiquette during the reign of Louis XV. Play took place at the house of the Dauphiness, as being the first lady of the State. It had, from the death of

Queen Maria Leczinska to the marriage of the Dauphin, been held at the abode of Madame Adélaïde. This removal, the result of an order of precedence not to be violated, was not the less displeasing to Madame Adélaïde, who established a separate party for play in her apartments, and scarcely ever went to that which not only the Court in general, but also the royal family, were expected to attend. The full-dress visits to the King on his *débotter* were continued. High mass was attended daily. The airings of the Princesses were nothing more than rapid races in berlins, during which they were accompanied by Body Guards, equerries, and pages on horseback. They galloped for some leagues from Versailles. Calashes were used only in hunting.

The young Princesses were desirous to infuse animation into their circle of associates by something useful as well as pleasant. They adopted the plan of learning and performing all the best plays of the French theatre. The Dauphin was the only spectator. The three Princesses, the two brothers of the King, and Messieurs Campan, father and son, were the sole performers, but they endeavoured to keep this amusement as secret as an affair of State; they dreaded the censure of Mesdames, and they had no doubt that Louis XV. would forbid such pastimes if he knew of them. They selected for their performance a cabinet in the *entresol* which nobody had occasion to enter.

A kind of proscenium, which could be taken down and shut up in a closet, formed the whole theatre. The Comte de Provence always knew his part with imperturbable accuracy; the Comte d'Artois knew his tolerably well, and recited elegantly; the Princesses acted badly. The Dauphiness acquitted herself in some characters with discrimination and feeling. The chief pleasure of this amusement consisted in all the costumes being elegant and accurate. The Dauphin entered into the spirit of these diversions, and laughed heartily at the comic characters as they came on the scene; from these amusements may be dated his discontinuance of the timid manner of his youth, and his taking pleasure in the society of the Dauphiness.

It was not till a long time afterwards that I learnt these particulars, M. Campan having kept the secret; but an unforeseen event had well-nigh exposed the whole mystery. One day the Queen desired M. Campan to go down into her closet to fetch something that she had forgotten; he was dressed for the character of Crispin, and was rouged. A private staircase led direct to the *entresol* through the dressing-room. M. Campan fancied he heard some noise, and remained still, behind the door, which was shut. A servant belonging to the wardrobe, who was, in fact, on the staircase, had also heard some noise, and, either from fear or curiosity, he suddenly opened the door; the figure of Crispin frightened him so that he

fell down backwards, shouting with his might, "Help! help!" My father-in-law raised him up, made him recognise his voice, and laid upon him an injunction of silence as to what he had seen. He felt himself, however, bound to inform the Dauphiness of what had happened, and she was afraid that a similar occurrence might betray their amusements. They were therefore discontinued.

The Princess occupied her time in her own apartment in the study of music and the parts in plays which she had to learn; the latter exercise, at least, produced the beneficial effect of strengthening her memory and familiarising her with the French language.

While Louis XV. reigned, the enemies of Marie Antoinette made no attempt to change public opinion with regard to her. She was always popular with the French people in general, and particularly with the inhabitants of Paris, who went on every opportunity to Versailles, the majority of them attracted solely by the pleasure of seeing her. The courtiers did not fully enter into the popular enthusiasm which the Dauphiness had inspired; the disgrace of the Duc de Choiseul had removed her real support from her; and the party which had the ascendancy at Court since the exile of that minister was, politically, as much opposed to her family as to herself. The Dauphiness was therefore surrounded by enemies at Versailles.

Nevertheless everybody appeared outwardly desirous to please her ; for the age of Louis XV., and the apathetic character of the Dauphin, sufficiently warned courtiers of the important part reserved for the Princess during the following reign, in case the Dauphin should become attached to her.

CHAPTER IV.

Death of Louis XV. — Picture of the Court. — Madame du Barry Dismissed. — Departure of the Court to Choisy. — M. de Maurepas Minister. — Conduct of the Abbé de Vermond.

ABOUT the beginning of May, 1774, Louis XV., the strength of whose constitution had promised a long enough life, was attacked by confluent smallpox of the worst kind. Mesdames at this juncture inspired the Dauphiness with a feeling of respect and attachment, of which she gave them repeated proofs when she ascended the throne. In fact, nothing was more admirable nor more affecting than the courage with which they braved that most horrible disease. The air of the palace was infected; more than fifty persons took the smallpox, in consequence of having merely loitered in the galleries of Versailles, and ten died of it.

The end of the monarch was approaching. His reign, peaceful in general, had inherited strength from the power of his predecessor; on the other hand, his own weakness had been preparing misfortune for whoever should reign after him. The scene

was about to change; hope, ambition, joy, grief, and all those feelings which variously affected the hearts of the courtiers, sought in vain to disguise themselves under a calm exterior. It was easy to detect the different motives which induced them every moment to repeat to every one the question: "How is the King?" At length, on the 10th of May, 1774, the mortal career of Louis XV. terminated.¹

¹ Christopher de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris, the ardent apostle of frequent communion, arrived at Paris with the intention of soliciting, in public, the administration of the sacrament to the King, and secretly retarding it as much as possible. The ceremony could not take place without the *previous* and *public expulsion of the concubine*, according to the canons of the Church and the Jesuitical party, of which Christopher was the leader. This party, which had made use of Madame du Barry to suppress the Parliaments, to support the Duc d'Aiguillon, and ruin the Choiseul faction, could not willingly consent to disgrace her canonically. The Archbishop went into the King's bedchamber, and found there Madame Adélaïde, the Duc d'Aumont, the Bishop of Senlis, and Richelieu, in whose presence he resolved not to say one word about confession for that day. This reticence so encouraged Louis XV. that, on the Archbishop withdrawing, he had Madame du Barry called in, and kissed her beautiful hands again with his wonted affection. On the 2d of May the King found himself a little better. Madame du Barry had brought him two confidential physicians, Lorry and Borden, who were enjoined to conceal the nature of his sickness from him in order to keep off the priests and save her from a humiliating dismissal. The King's improvement allowed Madame du Barry to divert him by her usual playfulness and conversation. But La Martinière, who was of the Choiseul party, and to whom they durst not refuse his right of entry, did not conceal from the King either the nature or the danger of his sickness. The King then sent for Madame du Barry, and said to her: "My love, I have got the smallpox, and my illness is very dangerous on account of my age and other disorders. I ought not to forget that I am the *most Christian King*, and the *eldest son of the Church*. I am sixty-four; the time is perhaps approaching when we must separate. I wish to prevent a scene like that of Metz." [When, in 1744, he had dismissed the Duchesse de Chateauroux.] "Apprise the Duc d'Aiguillon of what I say, that he may arrange with you if my

The Comtesse du Barry had, a few days previously, withdrawn to Ruelle, to the Duc d'Aiguillon's. Twelve or fifteen persons belonging to the Court thought it their duty to visit her there; their liveries were observed, and these visits were for a long time grounds for disfavour. More than six years after the King's death one of these persons being spoken of in the circle of the royal family, I heard it remarked, "That was one of the fifteen Ruelle carriages."

sickness grows worse; so that we may part without any publicity." The Jansenists and the Duc de Choiseul's party publicly said that M. d'Aiguillon and the Archbishop had resolved to let the King die without receiving the sacrament rather than disturb Madame du Barry. Annoyed by their remarks, Beaumont determined to go and reside at the Lazaristes, his house at Versailles, to avail himself of the King's last moments, and sacrifice Madame du Barry when the monarch's condition should become desperate. He arrived on the 3d of May, but did not see the King. Under existing circumstances, his object was to humble the enemies of his party and to support the favourite who had assisted to overcome them.

A contrary zeal animated the Bishop of Carcassonne, who urged that "the King ought to receive the sacrament; and by expelling the concubine to give an example of repentance to France and Christian Europe, which he had scandalised." "By what right," said Cardinal de la Roche Aymon, a complaisant courtier with whom the Bishop was at daggers drawn, "do you instruct me?" "There is my authority," replied the Bishop, holding up his pectoral cross. "Learn, monseigneur, to respect it, and do not suffer your King to die without the sacraments of the Church, of which he is the eldest son." The Duc d'Aiguillon and the Archbishop, who witnessed the discussion, put an end to it by asking for the King's orders relative to Madame du Barry. "She must be taken quietly to your seat at Ruelle," said the King; "I shall be grateful for the care Madame d'Aiguillon may take of her."

Madame du Barry saw the King again for a moment on the evening of the 4th, and promised to return to Court upon his recovery. She was scarcely gone when the King asked for her. "*She is gone*," was the answer. From that moment the disorder gained ground; he thought himself a dead man, without the possibility of recovery. The 5th and 6th

The whole Court went to the Château; the *œil-de-bœuf* was filled with courtiers, and the palace with the inquisitive. The Dauphin had settled that he would depart with the royal family the moment the King should breathe his last sigh. But on such an occasion decency forbade that positive orders for departure should be passed from mouth to mouth. The heads of the stables, therefore, agreed with the people who were in the King's room, that the latter should place a lighted taper near a window, and that at the instant of the King's decease one of them should extinguish it.¹

passed without a word of confession, viaticum, or extreme unction. The Duc de Fronsac threatened to throw the Curé of Versailles out of the window if he dared to mention them, but on the 7th, at three in the morning, the King *imperatively* called for the Abbé Maudoux. Confession lasted seventeen minutes. The Ducs de la Vrillière and d'Aiguillon wished to delay the viaticum; but La Martinière said to the King: "Sire, I have seen your Majesty in very trying circumstances; but never admired you as I have done to-day. No doubt your Majesty will immediately finish what you have so well begun." The King had his confessor Maudoux called back; this was a poor priest who had been placed about him for some years before because he was old and blind. He gave him absolution.

The formal renunciation desired by the Choiseul party, in order to humble and annihilate Madame du Barry with solemnity, was no more mentioned. The grand almoner, in concert with the Archbishop, composed this formula, pronounced in presence of the viaticum: "Although the King owes an account of his conduct to none but God, he declares his repentance at having scandalised his subjects, and is desirous to live solely for the maintenance of religion and the happiness of his people."

On the 8th and 9th the disorder grew worse; and the King beheld the whole surface of his body coming off piecemeal and corrupted. Deserted by his friends and by that crowd of courtiers which had so long cringed before him, his only consolation was the piety of his daughters. — SOULAVIE, "Historical and Political Memoirs," vol. i.

¹ One grudges to interfere with the beautiful theatrical "candle"

The taper was extinguished. On this signal the Body Guards, pages, and equerries mounted on horse-back, and all was ready for setting off. The Dauphin was with the Dauphiness. They were expecting together the intelligence of the death of Louis XV. A dreadful noise, absolutely like thunder, was heard in the outer apartment; it was the crowd of courtiers who were deserting the dead sovereign's antechamber, to come and do homage to the new power of Louis XVI. This extraordinary tumult informed Marie Antoinette and her husband that they were called to the throne; and, by a spontaneous movement, which deeply affected those around them, they threw themselves on their knees; both, pouring forth a flood of tears, exclaimed: "*O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign.*"

The Comtesse de Noailles entered, and was the first to salute Marie Antoinette as Queen of France. She requested their Majesties to condescend to quit the inner apartments for the grand *salon*, to receive the Princes and all the great officers, who were desirous to do homage to their new sovereigns. Marie Antoi-

which Madame Campan (i., 79) has lit on this occasion, and blown out at the moment of death. What candles may be lit or blown out in so large an establishment as that of Versailles, no man at such distance would like to affirm; at the same time, as it was two o'clock on a May afternoon, and these royal stables must have been five or six hundred yards from the royal sick-room, the candle does threaten to go out in spite of us. It remains burning indeed—in her fantasy; throwing light on much in those "*Mémoires*" of hers. — CARLYLE, "*French Revolution*," vol. i., p. 21.

nette received these first visits leaning upon her husband, with her handkerchief held to her eyes; the carriages drove up, the guards and equerries were on horseback. The Château was deserted; every one hastened to fly from contagion, which there was no longer any inducement to brave.

On leaving the chamber of Louis XV., the Duc de Villequier, first gentleman of the bedchamber for the year, ordered M. Andouillé, the King's chief surgeon, to open the body and embalm it. The chief surgeon would inevitably have died in consequence. "I am ready," replied Andouillé; "but while I operate you shall hold the head; your office imposes this duty upon you." The Duke went off without saying a word, and the corpse was neither opened nor embalmed. A few under-servants and workmen continued with the pestiferous remains, and paid the last duty to their master; the surgeons directed that spirits of wine should be poured into the coffin.

The entire Court set off for Choisy at four o'clock; Mesdames the King's aunts in their private carriage, and the Princesses under tuition with the Comtesse de Marsan and the under-governesses. The King, the Queen, Monsieur, the King's brother, Madame, and the Comte and Comtesse d'Artois went in the same carriage. The solemn scene that had just passed before their eyes, the multiplied ideas offered to their imaginations by that which was just opening, had

naturally inclined them to grief and reflection ; but, by the Queen's own confession, this inclination, little suited to their age, wholly left them before they had gone half their journey ; a word, drolly mangled by the Comtesse d'Artois, occasioned a general burst of laughter ; and from that moment they dried their tears.

The communication between Choisy and Paris was incessant ; never was a Court seen in greater agitation. What influence will the royal aunts have,—and the Queen ? What fate is reserved for the Comtesse du Barry ? Whom will the young King choose for his ministers ? All these questions were answered in a few days. It was determined that the King's youth required a confidential person near him ; and that there should be a prime minister. All eyes were turned upon De Machault and De Maurepas, both of them much advanced in years. The first had retired to his estate near Paris ; and the second to Pont Chartrain, to which place he had long been exiled. The letter recalling M. de Machault was written, when Madame Adélaïde obtained the preference of that important appointment for M. de Maurepas. The page to whose care the first letter had been actually consigned was recalled.¹

¹ If we may credit a contemporary writer, the Abbé de Radonvilliers was not without influence in this last determination. Chamfort relates the following anecdote *à propos* of the nomination of the Comte de Maurepas :

“It is a well-known fact that the King's letter, sent to M. de Maurepas, was written for M. de Machault. When M. de Maurepas arrived, the

The Duc d'Aiguillon had been too openly known as the private friend of the King's mistress; he was dismissed. M. de Vergennes, at that time ambassador of France at Stockholm, was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs; Comte du Muy, the intimate friend of the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI., obtained the War Department. The Abbé Terray in vain said, and wrote, that he had boldly done all possible injury to the creditors of the State during the reign of the late King; that order was restored in the finances; that nothing but what was beneficial to all parties remained to be done; and that the new Court was about to enjoy the advantages of the regenerating part of his plan of finance; all these reasons, set forth in five or six memorials, which he sent in succession to the King and Queen, did not avail to keep him in office. His talents were admitted, but the odium which his operations had necessarily brought upon his character, combined with the immorality of his private life, forbade his further stay at Court; he was succeeded by M. de Clugny. De Maupeou, the chancellor, was exiled; this caused universal joy. Lastly, the reassembling of the Parliaments produced

King could do no more than chat with him. At the end of the conversation, M. de Maurepas said to him: 'I will detail my ideas to-morrow at the Council.' It is related, too, that at this conversation he said to the King, 'Your Majesty, then, makes me Prime Minister?' 'No,' replied the King, 'I have no such intention.' 'I understand,' said M. de Maurepas, 'your Majesty wishes I should teach you to do without one.' — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

the strongest sensation ; Paris was in a delirium of joy, and not more than one person in a hundred foresaw that the spirit of the ancient magistracy would be still the same ; and that in a short time it would make new attempts upon the royal authority. Madame du Barry had been exiled to Pont-aux-Dames. This was a measure rather of necessity than of severity ; a short period of compulsory retreat was requisite in order completely to break off her connections with State affairs. The possession of Louveciennes and a considerable pension were continued to her.¹

Everybody expected the recall of M. de Choiseul ; the regret occasioned by his absence among the numerous friends whom he had left at Court, the attachment of the young Princess who was indebted to him for her elevation to the throne of France, and all concurring circumstances, seemed to foretell his return ; the Queen earnestly entreated it of the

¹ The Comtesse du Barry never forgot the mild treatment she experienced from the Court of Louis XVI. ; during the most violent convulsions of the Revolution she signified to the Queen that there was no one in France more grieved at the sufferings of her sovereign than herself ; that the honour she had for years enjoyed, of living near the throne, and the unbounded kindness of the King and Queen, had so sincerely attached her to the cause of royalty that she entreated the Queen to honour her by disposing of all she possessed. Though they did not accept her offer, their Majesties were affected at her gratitude. The Comtesse du Barry was, as is well known, one of the victims of the Revolution. She betrayed at the last great weakness, and the most ardent desire to live. She was the only woman who wept upon the scaffold and implored for mercy. Her beauty and tears made an impression on the populace, and the execution was hurried to a conclusion. — MADAME CAMFAN.

King, but she met with an insurmountable and unforeseen obstacle. The King, it is said, had imbibed the strongest prejudices against that minister, from secret memoranda penned by his father, and which had been committed to the care of the Duc de La Vauguyon, with an injunction to place them in his hands as soon as he should be old enough to study the art of reigning. It was by these memoranda that the esteem which he had conceived for the Maréchal du Muy was inspired, and we may add that Madame Adélaïde, who at this early period powerfully influenced the decisions of the young monarch, confirmed the impressions they had made.

The Queen conversed with M. Campan on the regret she felt at having been unable to procure the recall of M. de Choiseul, and disclosed the cause of it to him. The Abbé de Vermond, who, down to the time of the death of Louis XV., had been on terms of the strictest friendship with M. Campan, called upon him on the second day after the arrival of the Court at Choisy, and, assuming a serious air, said, "Monsieur, the Queen was indiscreet enough yesterday to speak to you of a minister to whom she must of course be attached, and whom his friends ardently desire to have near her; you are aware that we must give up all expectation of seeing the Duke at Court; you know the reasons why; but you do not know that the young Queen, having mentioned

the conversation in question to me, it was my duty, both as her preceptor and her friend, to remonstrate severely with her on her indiscretion in communicating to you those particulars of which you are in possession. I am now come to tell you that if you continue to avail yourself of the good nature of your mistress to initiate yourself in secrets of State, you will have me for your most inveterate enemy. The Queen should find here no other confidant than myself respecting things that ought to remain secret." M. Campan answered that he did not covet the important and dangerous character at the new Court which the Abbé wished to appropriate; and that he should confine himself to the duties of his office, being sufficiently satisfied with the continued kindness with which the Queen honoured him. Notwithstanding this, however, he informed the Queen, on the very same evening, of the injunction he had received. She owned that she had mentioned their conversation to the Abbé; that he had indeed seriously scolded her, in order to make her feel the necessity of being secret in concerns of State; and she added, "The Abbé cannot like you, my dear Campan; he did not expect that I should, on my arrival in France, find in my household a man who would suit me so exactly as you have done. I know that he has taken umbrage at it; that is enough. I know, too, that you are incapable of attempting

anything to injure him in my esteem; an attempt which would besides be vain, for I have been too long attached to him. As to yourself, be easy on the score of the Abbé's hostility, which shall not in any way hurt you."

The Abbé de Vermond having made himself master of the office of sole confidant to the Queen, was nevertheless agitated whenever he saw the young King; he could not be ignorant that the Abbé had been promoted by the Duc de Choiseul, and was believed to favour the Encyclopedists, against whom Louis XVI. entertained a secret prejudice, although he suffered them to gain so great an ascendancy during his reign. The Abbé had, moreover, observed that the King had never, while Dauphin, addressed a single word to him; and that he very frequently only answered him with a shrug of the shoulders. He therefore determined on writing to Louis XVI., and intimating that he owed his situation at Court solely to the confidence with which the late King had honoured him; and that as habits contracted during the Queen's education placed him continually in the closest intimacy with her, he could not enjoy the honour of remaining near her Majesty without the King's consent. Louis XVI. sent back his letter, after writing upon it these words: "I approve the Abbé de Vermond continuing in his office about the Queen."

CHAPTER V.

Influence of Example upon the Courtiers. — Enthusiasm Raised by the New Reign. — Mourning at La Muette. — The Queen. — The King and the Princes, His Brothers, Are Inoculated. — Stay at Marly. — Calumnies against the Queen. — Böhmer, the Jeweller. — Mademoiselle Bertin. — Changes of Fashion. — Simplicity of the Court of Vienna. — Extreme Temperance, Decorum, and Modesty of Marie Antoinette. — The Code of Service. — Public Dinners. — The Queen's Wardrobe. — Her Toilet. — Daily Routine. — Hearing Mass.

At the period of his grandfather's death, Louis XVI. began to be exceedingly attached to the Queen. The first period of so deep a mourning not admitting of indulgence in the diversion of hunting, he proposed to her walks in the gardens of Choisy; they went out like husband and wife, the young King giving his arm to the Queen, and accompanied by a very small suite. The influence of this example had such an effect upon the courtiers that the next day several couples, who had long, and for good reasons, been disunited, were seen walking upon the terrace with the same apparent conjugal intimacy. Thus they spent whole hours, braving the intolerable

wearisomeness of their protracted *tête-à-têtes*, out of mere obsequious imitation.

The devotion of Mesdames to the King their father throughout his dreadful malady had produced that effect upon their health which was generally apprehended. On the fourth day after their arrival at Choisy they were attacked by pains in the head and chest, which left no doubt as to the danger of their situation. It became necessary instantly to send away the young royal family; and the Château de la Muette, in the Bois de Boulogne, was selected for their reception. Their arrival at that residence, which was very near Paris, drew so great a concourse of people into its neighbourhood, that even at day-break the crowd had begun to assemble round the gates. Shouts of "*Vive le Roi!*" were scarcely interrupted for a moment between six o'clock in the morning and sunset. The unpopularity the late King had drawn upon himself during his latter years, and the hopes to which a new reign gives birth, occasioned these transports of joy.

A fashionable jeweller made a fortune by the sale of mourning snuff-boxes, whereon the portrait of the young Queen, in a black frame of shagreen, gave rise to the pun: "*Consolation in chagrin.*" All the fashions, and every article of dress, received names expressing the spirit of the moment. Symbols of abundance were everywhere represented, and the

head-dresses of the ladies were surrounded by ears of wheat. Poets sang of the new monarch ; all hearts, or rather all heads, in France were filled with enthusiasm. Never did the commencement of any reign excite more unanimous testimonials of love and attachment. It must be observed, however, that, amidst all this intoxication, the anti-Austrian party never lost sight of the young Queen, but kept on the watch, with the malicious desire to injure her through such errors as might arise from her youth and inexperience.

Their Majesties had to receive at La Muette the condolences of the ladies who had been presented at Court, who all felt themselves called on to pay homage to the new sovereigns. Old and young hastened to present themselves on the day of general reception ; little black bonnets with great wings, shaking heads, low curtsies, keeping time with the motions of the head, made, it must be admitted, a few venerable dowagers appear somewhat ridiculous ; but the Queen, who possessed a great deal of dignity, and a high respect for decorum, was not guilty of the grave fault of losing the state she was bound to preserve. An indiscreet piece of drollery of one of the ladies of the palace, however, procured her the imputation of doing so. The Marquise de Clermont-Tonnerre, whose office required that she should continue standing behind the Queen, fatigued by the length of the ceremony, seated herself on the floor, concealed behind the

fence formed by the hoops of the Queen and the ladies of the palace. Thus seated, and wishing to attract attention and to appear lively, she twitched the dresses of those ladies, and played a thousand other tricks. The contrast of these childish pranks with the solemnity which reigned over the rest of the Queen's chamber disconcerted her Majesty: she several times placed her fan before her face to hide an involuntary smile, and the severe old ladies pronounced that the young Queen had decided all those respectable persons who were pressing forward to pay their homage to her; that she liked none but the young; that she was deficient in decorum; and that not one of them would attend her Court again. The epithet *moqueuse* was applied to her; and there is no epithet less favourably received in the world.

The next day a very ill-natured song was circulated; the stamp of the party to which it was attributable might easily be seen upon it. I remember only the following chorus:

“Little Queen, you must not be
So saucy, with your twenty years;
Your ill-used courtiers soon will see
You pass, once more, the barriers.
Fal lal lal, fal lal la.”

The errors of the great, or those which ill-nature chooses to impute to them, circulate in the world with

the greatest rapidity, and become historical traditions, which every one delights to repeat. More than fifteen years after this occurrence I heard some old ladies in the most retired part of Auvergne relating all the particulars of the day of public condolence for the late King, on which, as they said, the Queen had laughed in the faces of the sexagenarian duchesses and princesses who had thought it their duty to appear on the occasion.

The King and the Princes, his brothers, determined to avail themselves of the advantages held out by inoculation, as a safeguard against the illness under which their grandfather had just fallen; but the utility of this new discovery not being then generally acknowledged in France, many persons were greatly alarmed at the step; those who blamed it openly threw all the responsibility of it upon the Queen, who alone, they said, could have ventured to give such rash advice, inoculation being at this time established in the Northern Courts. The operation upon the King and his brothers, performed by Doctor Jauberthou, was fortunately quite successful.

When the convalescence of the Princes was perfectly established, the excursions to Marly became cheerful enough. Parties on horseback and in calashes were formed continually. The Queen was desirous to afford herself one very innocent gratification; she had never seen the day break; and having now no other

consent than that of the King to seek, she intimated her wish to him. He agreed that she should go, at three o'clock in the morning, to the eminences of the gardens of Marly; and, unfortunately, little disposed to partake in her amusements, he himself went to bed. Foreseeing some inconveniences possible in this nocturnal party, the Queen determined on having a number of people with her; and even ordered her waiting women to accompany her. All precautions were ineffectual to prevent the effects of calumny, which thenceforward sought to diminish the general attachment that she had inspired. A few days afterwards, the most wicked libel that appeared during the earlier years of her reign was circulated in Paris. The blackest colours were employed to paint an enjoyment so harmless that there is scarcely a young woman living in the country who has not endeavoured to procure it for herself. The verses which appeared on this occasion were entitled "Sunrise."

The Duc d'Orléans, then Duc de Chartres, was among those who accompanied the young Queen in her nocturnal ramble: he appeared very attentive to her at this epoch; but it was the only moment of his life in which there was any advance towards intimacy between the Queen and himself. The King disliked the character of the Duc de Chartres, and the Queen always excluded him from her private society. It is therefore without the slightest foundation that some

writers have attributed to feelings of jealousy or wounded self-love the hatred which he displayed towards the Queen during the latter years of their existence.

It was on this first journey to Marly that Boehmer, the jeweller, appeared at Court,—a man whose stupidity and avarice afterwards fatally affected the happiness and reputation of Marie Antoinette. This person had, at great expense, collected six pear-formed diamonds of a prodigious size; they were perfectly matched and of the finest water. The earrings which they composed had, before the death of Louis XV., been destined for the Comtesse du Barry.

Boehmer, by the recommendation of several persons about the Court, came to offer these jewels to the Queen. He asked four hundred thousand francs for them. The young Princess could not withstand her wish to purchase them; and the King having just raised the Queen's income, which, under the former reign, had been but two hundred thousand livres, to one hundred thousand crowns a year, she wished to make the purchase out of her own purse, and not burthen the royal treasury with the payment. She proposed to Boehmer to take off the two buttons which formed the tops of the clusters, as they could be replaced by two of her own diamonds. He consented, and then reduced the price of the earrings to

three hundred and sixty thousand francs ; the payment for which was to be made by instalments, and was discharged in the course of four or five years by the Queen's first *femme de chambre*, deputed to manage the funds of her privy purse. I have omitted no details as to the manner in which the Queen first became possessed of these jewels, deeming them very needful to place in its true light the too famous circumstance of the necklace, which happened near the end of her reign.

It was also on this first journey to Marly that the Duchesse de Chartres, afterwards Duchesse d'Orléans, introduced into the Queen's household Mademoiselle Bertin, a milliner who became celebrated at that time for the total change she effected in the dress of the French ladies.

It may be said that the mere admission of a milliner into the house of the Queen was followed by evil consequences to her Majesty. The skill of the milliner, who was received into the household, in spite of the custom which kept persons of her description out of it, afforded her the opportunity of introducing some new fashion every day. Up to this time the Queen had shown very plain taste in dress ; she now began to make it a principal occupation ; and she was of course imitated by other women.

All wished instantly to have the same dress as the Queen, and to wear the feathers and flowers to which

her beauty, then in its brilliancy, lent an indescribable charm. The expenditure of the younger ladies was necessarily much increased; mothers and husbands murmured at it; some few giddy women contracted debts; unpleasant domestic scenes occurred; in many families coldness or quarrels arose; and the general report was,—that the Queen would be the ruin of all the French ladies.

Fashion continued its fluctuating progress; and head-dresses, with their superstructures of gauze, flowers, and feathers, became so lofty that the women could not find carriages high enough to admit them; and they were often seen either stooping, or holding their heads out of the windows. Others knelt down in order to manage these elevated objects of ridicule with less danger.¹ Innumerable caricatures, exhibited in all directions, and some of which artfully gave the features of the Queen, attacked the extravagance of fashion, but with very little effect. It changed only,

¹ If the use of these extravagant feathers and head-dresses had continued, say the memoirs of that period very seriously, it would have effected a revolution in architecture. It would have been found necessary to raise the doors and ceilings of the boxes at the theatre, and particularly the bodies of carriages. It was not without mortification that the King observed the Queen's adoption of this style of dress: she was never so lovely in his eyes as when unadorned by art. One day Carlin, performing at Court as harlequin, stuck in his hat, instead of the rabbit's tail, its prescribed ornament, a peacock's feather of excessive length. This new appendage, which repeatedly got entangled among the scenery, gave him an opportunity for a great deal of buffoonery. There was some inclination to punish him; but it was presumed that he had not assumed the feather without authority.—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

as is always the case, through the influence of inconstancy and time.

The Queen's toilet was a masterpiece of etiquette; everything was done in a prescribed form. Both the *dame d'honneur* and the *dame d'atours* usually attended and officiated, assisted by the first *femme de chambre* and two ordinary women. The *dame d'atours* put on the petticoat, and handed the gown to the Queen. The *dame d'honneur* poured out the water for her hands and put on her linen. When a princess of the royal family happened to be present while the Queen was dressing, the *dame d'honneur* yielded to her the latter act of office, but still did not yield it directly to the Princesses of the blood; in such a case the *dame d'honneur* was accustomed to present the linen to the first *femme de chambre*, who, in her turn, handed it to the Princess of the blood. Each of these ladies observed these rules scrupulously as affecting her rights. One winter's day it happened that the Queen, who was entirely undressed, was just going to put on her shift; I held it ready unfolded for her; the *dame d'honneur* came in, slipped off her gloves, and took it. A scratching was heard at the door; it was opened, and in came the Duchesse d'Orléans: her gloves were taken off, and she came forward to take the garment; but as it would have been wrong in the *dame d'honneur* to hand it to her she gave it to me, and I handed it to the Princess. More scratching:

it was Madame la Comtesse de Provence; the Duchesse d'Orléans handed her the linen. All this while the Queen kept her arms crossed upon her bosom, and appeared to feel cold; Madame observed her uncomfortable situation, and, merely laying down her handkerchief without taking off her gloves, she put on the linen, and in doing so knocked the Queen's cap off. The Queen laughed to conceal her impatience, but not until she had muttered several times, "How disagreeable! how tiresome!"

All this etiquette, however inconvenient, was suitable to the royal dignity, which expects to find servants in all classes of persons, beginning even with the brothers and sisters of the monarch.

Speaking here of etiquette, I do not allude to majestic state, appointed for days of ceremony in all Courts. I mean those minute ceremonies that were pursued towards our Kings in their inmost privacies, in their hours of pleasure, in those of pain, and even during the most revolting of human infirmities.¹

These servile rules were drawn up into a kind of code; they offered to a Richelieu, a La Rochefoucauld and a Duras, in the exercise of their domestic functions, opportunities of intimacy useful to their interests; and their vanity was flattered by customs which converted the right to give a glass of water, to put on a dress, and to remove a basin, into honourable prerogatives.

¹ *Vide* WRAKALL'S "Memoirs."

Princes thus accustomed to be treated as divinities naturally ended by believing that they were of a distinct nature, of a purer essence than the rest of mankind.

This sort of etiquette, which led our Princes to be treated in private as idols, made them in public martyrs to decorum. Marie Antoinette found in the Château of Versailles a multitude of established customs which appeared to her insupportable.

The ladies-in-waiting, who were all obliged to be sworn, and to wear full Court dresses, were alone entitled to remain in the room, and to attend in conjunction with the *dame d'honneur* and the tirewoman. The Queen abolished all this formality. When her head was dressed, she curtsied to all the ladies who were in her chamber, and, followed only by her own women, went into her closet, where Mademoiselle Bertin, who could not be admitted into the chamber, used to await her.¹ It was in this inner closet that she produced her new and numerous dresses. The Queen was also desirous of being served by the most fashionable hairdresser in Paris. Now the custom

¹ Mademoiselle Bertin, it is said, upon the strength of the Queen's kindness, became ridiculously proud. A lady one day went to her to ask for some patterns of mourning for the Empress. Several were shown to her, all of which she rejected. Mademoiselle Bertin exclaimed in a tone made up of vexation and self-sufficiency, "Show her, then, some specimens of my last negotiations with her Majesty." However ridiculous the expression may sound, it was actually used as related.—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

which forbade all persons in inferior offices, employed by royalty, to exert their talents for the public, was no doubt intended to cut off all communication between the privacy of princes and society at large; the latter being always extremely curious respecting the most trifling particulars relative to the private life of the former. The Queen, fearing that the taste of the hairdresser would suffer if he should discontinue the general practice of his art, ordered him to attend as usual certain ladies of the Court and of Paris; and this multiplied the opportunities of learning details respecting the household, and very often of misrepresenting them.

One of the customs most disagreeable to the Queen was that of dining every day in public. Maria Lezczinska had always submitted to this wearisome practice; Marie Antoinette followed it as long as she was Dauphiness. The Dauphin dined with her, and each branch of the family had its public dinner daily. The ushers suffered all decently dressed people to enter; the sight was the delight of persons from the country. At the dinner-hour there were none to be met upon the stairs but honest folks, who, after having seen the Dauphiness take her soup, went to see the Princes eat their *bouilli*, and then ran themselves out of breath to behold Mesdames at their dessert.

Very ancient usage, too, required that the Queens of France should appear in public surrounded only

by women ; even at meal-times no persons of the other sex attended to serve at table ; and although the King ate publicly with the Queen, yet he himself was served by women with everything which was presented to him directly at table. The *dame d'honneur*, kneeling, for her own accommodation, upon a low stool, with a napkin upon her arm, and four women in full dress, presented the plates to the King and Queen. The *dame d'honneur* handed them drink. This service had formerly been the right of the maids of honour. The Queen, upon her accession to the throne, abolished the usage altogether. She also freed herself from the necessity of being followed in the Palace of Versailles by two of her women in Court dresses, during those hours of the day when the ladies-in-waiting were not with her. From that time she was accompanied only by a single *valet de chambre* and two footmen. All the changes made by Marie Antoinette were of the same description ; a disposition gradually to substitute the simple customs of Vienna for those of Versailles was more injurious to her than she could possibly have imagined.

When the King slept in the Queen's apartment he always rose before her ; the exact hour was communicated to the head *femme de chambre*, who entered, preceded by a servant of the bedchamber bearing a taper ; she crossed the room and unbolted the door which separated the Queen's apartment from that of

the King. She there found the first *valet de chambre* for the quarter, and a servant of the chamber. They entered, opened the bed curtains on the King's side, and presented him slippers generally, as well as the dressing-gown, which he put on, of gold or silver stuff. The first *valet de chambre* took down a short sword which was always laid within the railing on the King's side. When the King slept with the Queen, this sword was brought upon the armchair appropriated to the King, and which was placed near the Queen's bed, within the gilt railing which surrounded the bed. The first *femme de chambre* conducted the King to the door, bolted it again, and, leaving the Queen's chamber, did not return until the hour appointed by her Majesty the evening before. At night the Queen went to bed before the King; the first *femme de chambre* remained seated at the foot of her bed until the arrival of his Majesty, in order, as in the morning, to see the King's attendants out and bolt the door after them. The Queen awoke habitually at eight o'clock, and breakfasted at nine, frequently in bed, and sometimes after she had risen, at a table placed opposite her couch.

In order to describe the Queen's private service intelligibly, it must be recollected that *service* of every kind was *honour*, and had not any other denomination. *To do the honours of the service* was to present the service to a person of superior rank, who happened to

arrive at the moment it was about to be performed. Thus, supposing the Queen asked for a glass of water, the servant of the chamber handed to the first woman a silver gilt waiter, upon which were placed a covered goblet and a small decanter; but should the lady of honour come in, the first woman was obliged to present the waiter to her, and if Madame or the Comtesse d'Artois came in at the moment, the waiter went again from the lady of honour into the hands of the Princess before it reached the Queen. It must be observed, however, that if a princess of the blood instead of a princess of the family entered, the service went directly from the first woman to the princess of the blood, the lady of honour being excused from transferring to any but princesses of the royal family. Nothing was presented directly to the Queen; her handkerchief or her gloves were placed upon a long salver of gold or silver gilt, which was placed as a piece of furniture of ceremony upon a side-table, and was called a *gantière*. The first woman presented to her in this manner all that she asked for, unless the tirewoman, the lady of honour, or a princess were present, and then the gradation pointed out in the instance of the glass of water was always observed.

Whether the Queen breakfasted in bed or up, those entitled to the *petites entrées* were equally admitted; this privilege belonged of right to her chief physician, chief surgeon, physician in ordinary, reader, closet

secretary, the King's four first *valets de chambre* and their reversioners, and the King's chief physicians and surgeons. There were frequently from ten to twelve persons at this first *entrée*. The lady of honour or the superintendent, if present, placed the breakfast equipage upon the bed; the Princesse de Lamballe frequently performed that office.

As soon as the Queen rose, the wardrobe woman was admitted to take away the pillows and prepare the bed to be made by some of the *valets de chambre*. She undrew the curtains, and the bed was not generally made until the Queen was gone to mass. Generally, excepting at St. Cloud, where the Queen bathed in an apartment below her own, a slipper bath was rolled into her room, and her bathers brought everything that was necessary for the bath. The Queen bathed in a large gown of English flannel buttoned down to the bottom; its sleeves throughout, as well as the collar, were lined with linen. When she came out of the bath the first woman held up a cloth to conceal her entirely from the sight of her women, and then threw it over her shoulders. The bathers wrapped her in it and dried her completely. She then put on a long and wide open chemise, entirely trimmed with lace, and afterwards a white taffety bed-gown. The wardrobe woman warmed the bed; the slippers were of dimity, trimmed with lace. Thus dressed, the Queen went to bed again, and the bathers and ser-

vants of the chamber took away the bathing apparatus. The Queen, replaced in bed, took a book or her tapestry work. On her bathing mornings she breakfasted in the bath. The tray was placed on the cover of the bath. These minute details are given here only to do justice to the Queen's scrupulous modesty. Her temperance was equally remarkable; she breakfasted on coffee or chocolate; at dinner ate nothing but white meat, drank water only, and supped on broth, a wing of a fowl, and small biscuits, which she soaked in a glass of water.

The tirewoman had under her order a principal under-tirewoman, charged with the care and preservation of all the Queen's dresses; two women to fold and press such articles as required it; two valets, and a porter of the wardrobe. The latter brought every morning into the Queen's apartments baskets covered with taffety, containing all that she was to wear during the day, and large cloths of green taffety covering the robes and the full dresses. The valet of the wardrobe on duty presented every morning a large book to the first *femme de chambre*, containing patterns of the gowns, full dresses, undresses, etc. Every pattern was marked, to show to which sort it belonged. The first *femme de chambre* presented this book to the Queen on her awaking, with a pincushion; her Majesty stuck pins in those articles which she chose for the day,—one for the dress, one for the afternoon

undress, and one for the full evening dress for card or supper parties in the private apartments. The book was then taken back to the wardrobe, and all that was wanted for the day was soon after brought in in large taffety wrappers. The wardrobe woman, who had the care of the linen, in her turn brought in a covered basket containing two or three chemises and handkerchiefs. The morning basket was called *prêt du jour*. In the evening she brought in one containing the nightgown and nightcap, and the stockings for the next morning; this basket was called *prêt de la nuit*. They were in the department of the lady of honour, the tirewoman having nothing to do with the linen. Nothing was put in order or taken care of by the Queen's women. As soon as the toilet was over, the valets and porter belonging to the wardrobe were called in, and they carried all away in a heap, in the taffety wrappers, to the tirewoman's wardrobe, where all were folded up again, hung up, examined, and cleaned with so much regularity and care that even the cast-off clothes scarcely looked as if they had been worn. The tirewoman's wardrobe consisted of three large rooms surrounded with closets, some furnished with drawers and others with shelves; there were also large tables in each of these rooms, on which the gowns and dresses were spread out and folded up.

For the winter the Queen had generally twelve full dresses, twelve undresses called fancy dresses, and

twelve rich hoop petticoats for the card and supper parties in the smaller apartments.

She had as many for the summer; those for the spring served likewise for the autumn. All these dresses were discarded at the end of each season, unless, indeed, she retained some that she particularly liked. I am not speaking of muslin or cambric gowns, or others of the same kind — they were lately introduced; but such as these were not renewed at each returning season, they were kept several years. The chief women were charged with the care and examination of the diamonds; this important duty was formerly confided to the tirewoman, but for many years had been included in the business of the first *femmes de chambre*.

The public toilet took place at noon. The toilet-table was drawn forward into the middle of the room. This piece of furniture was generally the richest and most ornamented of all in the apartment of the Princesses. The Queen used it in the same manner and place for undressing herself in the evening. She went to bed in corsets trimmed with ribbon, and sleeves trimmed with lace, and wore a large neck handkerchief. The Queen's combing cloth was presented by her first woman if she was alone at the commencement of the toilet; or, as well as the other articles, by the ladies of honour if they were come. At noon the women who had been in attendance four

and twenty hours were relieved by two women in full dress ; the first woman went also to dress herself. The *grandes entrées* were admitted during the toilet ; sofas were placed in circles for the superintendent, the ladies of honour, and tirewomen, and the governess of the children of France when she came there ; the duties of the ladies of the bedchamber, having nothing to do with any kind of domestic or private functions, did not begin until the hour of going out to mass ; they waited in the great closet, and entered when the toilet was over. The Princes of the blood, captains of the Guards, and all great officers having the entry paid their court at the hour of the toilet. The Queen saluted by nodding her head or bending her body, or leaning upon her toilet-table as if moving to rise ; the last mode of salutation was for the Princes of the blood. The King's brothers also came very generally to pay their respects to her Majesty while her hair was being dressed. In the earlier years of the reign the first part of the dressing was performed in the bed-chamber and according to the laws of etiquette ; that is to say, the lady of honour put on the chemise and poured out the water for the hands, the tirewoman put on the skirt of the gown or full dress, adjusted the handkerchief, and tied on the necklace. But when the young Queen became more seriously devoted to fashion, and the head-dress attained so extravagant a height that it became necessary to put on the chemise

from below, — when, in short, she determined to have her milliner, Mademoiselle Bertin, with her whilst she was dressing, whom the ladies would have refused to admit to any share in the honour of attending on the Queen, the dressing in the bedchamber was discontinued, and the Queen, leaving her toilet, withdrew into her closet to dress.

On returning into her chamber, the Queen, standing about the middle of it, surrounded by the superintendent, the ladies of honour and tirewomen, her ladies of the palace, the *chevalier d'honneur*, the chief equerry, her clergy ready to attend her to mass, and the Princesses of the royal family who happened to come, accompanied by all their chief attendants and ladies, passed in order into the gallery as in going to mass. The Queen's signatures were generally given at the moment of entry into the chamber. The secretary for orders presented the pen. Presentations of colonels on taking leave were usually made at this time. Those of ladies, and such as had a right to the tabouret, or sitting in the royal presence, were made on Sunday evenings before card-playing began, on their coming in from paying their respects. Ambassadors were introduced to the Queen on Tuesday mornings, accompanied by the introducer of ambassadors on duty, and by M. de Sequeville, the secretary for the ambassadors. The introducer in waiting usually came to the Queen at her toilet to apprise

her of the presentations of foreigners which would be made. The usher of the chamber, stationed at the entrance, opened the folding doors to none but the Princes and Princesses of the royal family, and announced them aloud. Quitting his post, he came forward to name to the lady of honour the persons who came to be presented, or who came to take leave; that lady again named them to the Queen at the moment they saluted her; if she and the tire-woman were absent, the first woman took the place and did that duty. The ladies of the bedchamber, chosen solely as companions for the Queen, had no domestic duties to fulfil, however opinion might dignify such offices. The King's letter in appointing them, among other instructions of etiquette, ran thus: "Having chosen you to bear the Queen company." There were hardly any emoluments accruing from this place.

The Queen heard mass with the King in the tribune, facing the grand altar and the choir, with the exception of the days of high ceremony, when their chairs were placed below upon velvet carpets fringed with gold. These days were marked by the name of *grand chapel days*.

The Queen named the collector beforehand, and informed her of it through her lady of honour, who was besides desired to send the purse to her. The collectors were almost always chosen from among

those who had been recently presented. After returning from mass the Queen dined every Sunday with the King only, in public in the cabinet of the nobility, a room leading to her chamber. Titled ladies having the honours sat during the dinner upon folding-chairs placed on each side of the table. Ladies without titles stood round the table; the captain of the Guards and the first gentleman of the chamber were behind the King's chair; behind that of the Queen were her first *maitre d'hôtel*, her *chevalier d'honneur*, and the chief equerry. The Queen's *maitre d'hôtel* was furnished with a large staff, six or seven feet in length, ornamented with golden *fleurs-de-lis*, and surmounted by *fleurs-de-lis* in the form of a crown. He entered the room with this badge of his office to announce that the Queen was served. The comptroller put into his hands the card of the dinner; in the absence of the *maitre d'hôtel* he presented it to the Queen himself, otherwise he only did him the honours of the service. The *maitre d'hôtel* did not leave his place, he merely gave the orders for serving up and removing; the comptroller and gentlemen serving placed the various dishes upon the table, receiving them from the inferior servants.

The Prince nearest to the crown presented water to wash the King's hands at the moment he placed himself at table, and a princess did the same service to the Queen.

The table service was formerly performed for the Queen by the lady of honour and four women in full dress; this part of the women's service was transferred to them on the suppression of the office of maids of honour. The Queen put an end to this etiquette in the first year of her reign. When the dinner was over the Queen returned without the King to her apartment with her women, and took off her hoop and train.

This unfortunate Princess, against whom the opinions of the French people were at length so much excited, possessed qualities which deserved to obtain the greatest popularity. None could doubt this who, like myself, had heard her with delight describe the patriarchal manners of the House of Lorraine. She was accustomed to say that, by transplanting their manners into Austria, the Princes of that house had laid the foundation of the unassailable popularity enjoyed by the imperial family. She frequently related to me the interesting manner in which the Ducs de Lorraine levied the taxes. "The sovereign Prince," said she, "went to church; after the sermon he rose, waved his hat in the air, to show that he was about to speak, and then mentioned the sum whereof he stood in need. Such was the zeal of the good Lorrainers that men have been known to take away linen or household utensils without the knowledge of their wives, and sell them to add the value to their contri-

bution. It sometimes happened, too, that the Prince received more money than he had asked for, in which case he restored the surplus."

All who were acquainted with the Queen's private qualities knew that she equally deserved attachment and esteem. Kind and patient to excess in her relations with her household, she indulgently considered all around her, and interested herself in their fortunes and in their pleasures. She had, among her women, young girls from the Maison de St. Cyr, all well born; the Queen forbade them the play when the performances were not suitable; sometimes, when old plays were to be represented, if she found she could not with certainty trust to her memory, she would take the trouble to read them in the morning, to enable her to decide whether the girls should or should not go to see them, — rightly considering herself bound to watch over their morals and conduct.

CHAPTER VI.

Examination of the Papers of Louis XV. by Louis XVI. — Man in the Iron Mask. — The Late King's Interest in Certain Financial Companies. — Representation of "Iphigenia in Aulis." — The King Gives Petit Trianon to the Queen. — The Archduke Maximilian's Journey to France. — Questions of Precedence. — Misadventure of the Archduke. — *Accouchement* of the Comtesse d'Artois. — The *Poissardes* Cry Out to the Queen to Give Heirs to the Throne. — Death of the Duc de La Vauguyon. — Portrait of Louis XVI.; of the Comte de Provence; of the Comte d'Artois.

DURING the first few months of his reign Louis XVI. dwelt at La Muette, Marly, and Compiègne. When settled at Versailles he occupied himself with a general examination of his grandfather's papers. He had promised the Queen to communicate to her all that he might discover relative to the history of the man with the iron mask, who, he thought, had become so inexhaustible a source of conjecture only in consequence of the interest which the pen of a celebrated writer had excited respecting the detention of a prisoner of State, who was merely a man of whimsical tastes and habits.

I was with the Queen when the King, having finished his researches, informed her that he had not found anything among the secret papers elucidating the existence of this prisoner; that he had conversed on the matter with M. de Maurepas, whose age made him contemporary with the epoch during which the story must have been known to the ministers; and that M. de Maurepas had assured him he was merely a prisoner of a very dangerous character, in consequence of his disposition for intrigue. He was a subject of the Duke of Mantua, and was enticed to the frontier, arrested there, and kept prisoner, first at Pignerol, and afterwards in the Bastille. This transfer took place in consequence of the appointment of the governor of the former place to the government of the latter. It was for fear the prisoner should profit by the inexperience of a new governor that he was sent with the Governor of Pignerol to the Bastille.

Such was, in fact, the truth about the man on whom people have been pleased to fix an iron mask. And thus was it related in writing, and published by M. — twenty years ago. He had searched the archives of the Foreign Office, and laid the real story before the public; but the public, prepossessed in favour of a marvellous version, would not acknowledge the authenticity of his account. Every man relied upon the authority of Voltaire; and it was

believed that a natural or a twin brother of Louis XIV. lived many years in prison with a mask over his face. The story of this mask, perhaps, had its origin in the old custom, among both men and women in Italy, of wearing a velvet mask when they exposed themselves to the sun. It is possible that the Italian captive may have sometimes shown himself upon the terrace of his prison with his face thus covered. As to the silver plate which this celebrated prisoner is said to have thrown from his window, it is known that such a circumstance did happen, but it happened at Valzin, in the time of Cardinal Richelieu. This anecdote has been mixed up with the inventions respecting the Piedmontese prisoner.

In this survey of the papers of Louis XV. by his grandson some very curious particulars relative to his private treasury were found. Shares in various financial companies afforded him a revenue, and had in course of time produced him a capital of some amount, which he applied to his secret expenses. The King collected his vouchers of title to these shares, and made a present of them to M. Thierry de Ville d'Avray, his chief *valet de chambre*.

The Queen was desirous to secure the comfort of Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV., who were held in the highest respect. About this period she contributed to furnish them with a revenue sufficient to provide them an easy, pleasant existence. The King

gave them the Château of Bellevue; and added to the produce of it, which was given up to them, the expenses of their table and equipage, and payment of all the charges of their household, the number of which was even increased. During the lifetime of Louis XV., who was a very selfish prince, his daughters, although they had attained forty years of age, had no other place of residence than their apartments in the Château of Versailles; no other walks than such as they could take in the large park of that palace; and no other means of gratifying their taste for the cultivation of plants but by having boxes and vases, filled with them, in their balconies or their closets. They had, therefore, reason to be much pleased with the conduct of Marie Antoinette, who had the greatest influence in the King's kindness towards his aunts.

Paris did not cease, during the first years of the reign, to give proofs of pleasure whenever the Queen appeared at any of the plays of the capital. At the representation of "Iphigenia in Aulis," the actor who sang the words, "Let us sing, let us celebrate our Queen!" which were repeated by the chorus, directed by a respectful movement the eyes of the whole assembly upon her Majesty. Reiterated cries of *Bis!* and clapping of hands, were followed by such a burst of enthusiasm that many of the audience added their voices to those of the actors in order to celebrate, it

might too truly be said, another Iphigenia. The Queen, deeply affected, covered her eyes with her handkerchief; and this proof of sensibility raised the public enthusiasm to a still higher pitch.¹

The King gave Marie Antoinette Petit Trianon.² Henceforward she amused herself with improving the gardens, without allowing any addition to the building, or any change in the furniture, which was very shabby, and remained, in 1789, in the same state as during the reign of Louis XV. Everything there, without exception, was preserved; and the Queen slept in a faded bed, which had been used by the Comtesse du Barry. The charge of extravagance, generally made against the Queen, is the most unaccountable of all the popular errors respecting her character. She had exactly the contrary failing; and I could prove that she often carried her economy to a degree of parsimony actually blamable, especially in

¹ The theatre was a constant topic of conversation at Court. When the Queen had not been present, she never omitted asking, "Was it well attended?" I have heard more than one courteous Duke reply, with a bow, "There was not even a cat." This did not mean that the theatre was empty. It was even possible that it might be full; but only with honest citizens and country gentry. The nobility affected to know only their own class. — MADAME CAMPAN.

² The Château of Petit Trianon, which was built for Louis XV., was not remarkably handsome as a building. The luxuriance of the hothouses rendered the place agreeable to that Prince. He spent a few days there several times in the year. It was when he was setting off from Versailles for Petit Trianon that he was struck in the side by the knife of Damiens, and it was there that he was attacked by the smallpox, of which he died on the 10th of May, 1774. — MADAME CAMPAN.

a sovereign. She took a great liking for Trianon, and used to go there alone, followed by a valet; but she found attendants ready to receive her, — a *concierger* and his wife, who served her as *femme de chambre*, women of the wardrobe, footmen, etc.

When she first took possession of Petit Trianon, it was reported that she changed the name of the seat which the King had given her, and called it *Little Vienna*, or *Little Schoenbrunn*. A person who belonged to the Court, and was silly enough to give this report credit, wishing to visit Petit Trianon with a party, wrote to M. Campan, requesting the Queen's permission to do so. In his note he called Trianon *Little Vienna*. Similar requests were usually laid before the Queen just as they were made: she chose to give the permissions to see her gardens herself, liking to grant these little favours. When she came to the words I have quoted she was very much offended, and exclaimed, angrily, that there were too many fools ready to aid the malicious; that she had been told of the report circulated, which pretended that she had thought of nothing but her own country, and that she kept an Austrian heart, while the interests of France alone ought to engage her. She refused the request so awkwardly made, and desired M. Campan to reply that Trianon was not to be seen for some time, and that the Queen was astonished that any man in good society should believe she would

do so ill-judged a thing as to change the French names of her palaces to foreign ones.

Before the Emperor Joseph II.'s first visit to France the Queen received a visit from the Archduke Maximilian in 1775. A stupid act of the ambassador, seconded on the part of the Queen by the Abbé de Vermond, gave rise at that period to a discussion which offended the Princes of the blood and the chief nobility of the kingdom. Travelling incognito, the young Prince claimed that the first visit was not due from him to the Princes of the blood; and the Queen supported his pretension.

From the time of the Regency, and on account of the residence of the family of Orléans in the bosom of the capital, Paris had preserved a remarkable degree of attachment and respect for that branch of the royal house; and although the crown was becoming more and more remote from the Princes of the House of Orléans, they had the advantage (a great one with the Parisians) of being the descendants of Henri IV. An affront to that popular family was a serious ground of dislike to the Queen. It was at this period that the circles of the city, and even of the Court, expressed themselves bitterly about her levity, and her partiality for the House of Austria. The Prince for whom the Queen had embarked in an important family quarrel — and a quarrel involving national prerogatives — was, besides, little calculated

to inspire interest. Still young, uninformed, and deficient in natural talent, he was always making blunders.

He went to the Jardin du Roi; M. de Buffon, who received him there, offered him a copy of his works; the Prince declined accepting the book, saying to M. de Buffon, in the most polite manner possible, "I should be very sorry to deprive you of it."¹ It may be supposed that the Parisians were much entertained with this answer.

The Queen was exceedingly mortified at the mistakes made by her brother; but what hurt her most was being accused of preserving an Austrian heart. Marie Antoinette had more than once to endure that imputation during the long course of her misfortunes. Habit did not stop the tears such injustice caused; but the first time she was suspected of not loving France, she gave way to her indignation. All that she could say on the subject was useless; by seconding the pretensions of the Archduke she had put arms into her enemies' hands; they were labouring to deprive her of the love of the people, and endeavoured, by all possible means, to spread a belief that the Queen sighed for Germany, and preferred that country to France.

¹ Joseph II., on his visit to France, also went to see M. de Buffon, and said to that celebrated man, "I am come to fetch the copy of your works which my brother forgot."—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Marie Antoinette had none but herself to rely on for preserving the fickle smiles of the Court and the public. The King, too indifferent to serve her as a guide, as yet had conceived no love for her, notwithstanding the intimacy that grew between them at Choisy. In his closet Louis XVI. was immersed in deep study. At the Council he was busied with the welfare of his people; hunting and mechanical occupations engrossed his leisure moments, and he never thought on the subject of an heir.

The coronation took place at Rheims, with all the accustomed pomp. At this period the people's love for Louis XVI. burst forth in transports not to be mistaken for party demonstrations or idle curiosity. He replied to this enthusiasm by marks of confidence, worthy of a people happy in being governed by a good King; he took a pleasure in repeatedly walking without guards, in the midst of the crowd which pressed around him, and called down blessings on his head. I remarked the impression made at this time by an observation of Louis XVI. On the day of his coronation he put his hand up to his head, at the moment of the crown being placed upon it, and said, "It pinches me." Henri III. had exclaimed, "It pricks me." Those who were near the King were struck with the similarity between these two exclamations, though not of a class likely to be blinded by the superstitious fears of ignorance.

While the Queen, neglected as she was, could not even hope for the happiness of being a mother, she had the mortification of seeing the Comtesse d'Artois give birth to the Duc d'Angoulême.

Custom required that the royal family and the whole Court should be present at the *accouchement* of the Princesses; the Queen was therefore obliged to stay a whole day in her sister-in-law's chamber. The moment the Comtesse d'Artois was informed a prince was born, she put her hand to her forehead and exclaimed with energy, "My God, how happy I am!" The Queen felt very differently at this involuntary and natural exclamation. Nevertheless, her behaviour was perfect. She bestowed all possible marks of tenderness upon the young mother, and would not leave her until she was again put into bed; she afterwards passed along the staircase, and through the hall of the guards, with a calm demeanour, in the midst of an immense crowd. The *poissardes*, who had assumed a right of speaking to sovereigns in their own vulgar language, followed her to the very doors of her apartments, calling out to her with gross expressions, that *she* ought to produce heirs. The Queen reached her inner room, hurried and agitated; she shut herself up to weep with me alone, not from jealousy of her sister-in-law's happiness, — of that she was incapable, — but from sorrow at her own situation.

Deprived of the happiness of giving an heir to the crown, the Queen endeavoured to interest herself in the children of the people of her household. She had long been desirous to bring up one of them herself, and to make it the constant object of her care. A little village boy, four or five years old, full of health, with a pleasing countenance, remarkably large blue eyes, and fine light hair, got under the feet of the Queen's horses, when she was taking an airing in a calash, through the hamlet of St. Michel, near Louveciennes. The coachman and postilions stopped the horses, and the child was rescued without the slightest injury. Its grandmother rushed out of the door of her cottage to take it; but the Queen, standing up in her calash and extending her arms, called out that the child was hers, and that destiny had given it to her, to console her, no doubt, until she should have the happiness of having one herself. "Is his mother alive?" asked the Queen. "No, Madame; my daughter died last winter, and left five small children upon my hands." "I will take this one, and provide for all the rest; do you consent?" "Ah, Madame, they are too fortunate," replied the cottager; "but Jacques is a bad boy. I hope he will stay with you!" The Queen, taking little Jacques upon her knee, said that she would make him used to her, and gave orders to proceed. It was necessary, however, to shorten the drive, so

violently did Jacques scream, and kick the Queen and her ladies.

The arrival of her Majesty at her apartments at Versailles, holding the little rustic by the hand, astonished the whole household; he cried out with intolerable shrillness that he wanted his grandmother, his brother Louis, and his sister Marianne; nothing could calm him. He was taken away by the wife of a servant, who was appointed to attend him as nurse. The other children were put to school. Little Jacques, whose family name was Armand, came back to the Queen two days afterwards; a white frock trimmed with lace, a rose-coloured sash with silver fringe, and a hat decorated with feathers, were now substituted for the woollen cap, the little red frock, and the wooden shoes. The child was really very beautiful. The Queen was enchanted with him; he was brought to her every morning at nine o'clock; he breakfasted and dined with her, and often even with the King. She liked to call him *my child*,¹ and lavished caresses upon him, still maintaining a deep silence respecting the regrets which constantly occupied her heart.

This child remained with the Queen until the time when Madame was old enough to come home to her

¹ This little unfortunate was nearly twenty in 1792; the fury of the people and the fear of being thought a favourite of the Queen's had made him the most sanguinary terrorist of Versailles. He was killed at the battle of Jemappes.—MADAME CAMPAN.

august mother, who had particularly taken upon herself the care of her education.

The Queen talked incessantly of the qualities which she admired in Louis XVI., and gladly attributed to herself the slightest favourable change in his manner; perhaps she displayed too unreservedly the joy she felt, and the share she appropriated in the improvement. One day Louis XVI. saluted her ladies with more kindness than usual, and the Queen laughingly said to them, "Now confess, ladies, that for one so badly taught as a child, the King has saluted you with very good grace!"

The Queen hated M. de La Vauguyon; she accused him alone of those points in the habits, and even the sentiments, of the King which hurt her. A former first woman of the bedchamber to Queen Maria Leczinska had continued in office near the young Queen. She was one of those people who are fortunate enough to spend their lives in the service of kings without knowing anything of what is passing at Court. She was a great devotee; the Abbé Grisel, an ex-Jesuit, was her director. Being rich from her savings and an income of 50,000 livres, she kept a very good table; in her apartment, at the Grand Commun, the most distinguished persons who still adhered to the Order of Jesuits often assembled. The Duc de La Vauguyon was intimate with her; their chairs at the Eglise des Récollets were placed

near each other; at high mass and at vespers they sang the "Gloria in Excelsis" and the "Magnificat" together; and the pious virgin, seeing in him only one of God's elect, little imagined him to be the declared enemy of a Princess whom she served and revered. On the day of his death she ran in tears to relate to the Queen the piety, humility, and repentance of the last moments of the Duc de La Vauguyon. He had called his people together, she said, to ask their pardon. "For what?" replied the Queen, sharply; "he has placed and pensioned off all his servants; it was of the King and his brothers that the holy man you bewail should have asked pardon, for having paid so little attention to the education of princes on whom the fate and happiness of twenty-five millions of men depend. Luckily," added she, "the King and his brothers, still young, have incessantly laboured to repair the errors of their preceptor."

The progress of time, and the confidence with which the King and the Princes, his brothers, were inspired by the change in their situation since the death of Louis XV., had developed their characters. I will endeavour to depict them.

The features of Louis XVI. were noble enough, though somewhat melancholy in expression; his walk was heavy and unmajestic; his person greatly neglected; his hair, whatever might be the skill of his hairdresser, was soon in disorder. His voice, without

being harsh, was not agreeable; if he grew animated in speaking he often got above his natural pitch, and became shrill. The Abbé de Radonvilliers, his preceptor, one of the Forty of the French Academy, a learned and amiable man, had given him and Monseigneur a taste for study. The King had continued to instruct himself; he knew the English language perfectly; I have often heard him translate some of the most difficult passages in Milton's poems. He was a skilful geographer, and was fond of drawing and colouring maps; he was well versed in history, but had not perhaps sufficiently studied the spirit of it. He appreciated dramatic beauties, and judged them accurately. At Choisy, one day, several ladies expressed their dissatisfaction because the French actors were going to perform one of Molière's pieces. The King inquired why they disapproved of the choice. One of them answered that everybody must admit that Molière had *very bad taste*; the King replied that many things might be found in Molière contrary to fashion, but that it appeared to him difficult to point out any in bad taste.¹ This Prince combined with his

¹ The King, having purchased the Château of Rambouillet from the Duc de Penthièvre, amused himself with embellishing it. I have seen a register entirely in his own handwriting, which proves that he possessed a great variety of information on the minutiae of various branches of knowledge. In his accounts he would not omit an outlay of a franc. His figures and letters, when he wished to write legibly, were small and very neat, but in general he wrote very ill. He was so sparing of paper that he divided a sheet into eight, six, or four pieces, according to the length

attainments the attributes of a good husband, a tender father, and an indulgent master.

Unfortunately he showed too much predilection for the mechanical arts; masonry and lock-making so delighted him that he admitted into his private apartment a common locksmith, with whom he made keys and locks; and his hands, blackened by that sort of work, were often, in my presence, the subject of re-

of what he had to write. Towards the close of the page he compressed the letters, and avoided interlineations. The last words were close to the edge of the paper; he seemed to regret being obliged to begin another page. He was methodical and analytical; he divided what he wrote into chapters and sections. He had extracted from the works of Nicole and Fénelon, his favourite authors, three or four hundred concise and sententious phrases; these he had classed according to subject, and formed a work of them in the style of Montesquieu. To this treatise he had given the following general title: "Of Moderate Monarchy" (*De la Monarchie tempérée*), with chapters entitled, "Of the Person of the Prince;" "Of the Authority of Bodies in the State;" "Of the Character of the Executive Functions of the Monarchy." Had he been able to carry into effect all the grand precepts he had observed in Fénelon, Louis XVI. would have been an accomplished monarch, and France a powerful kingdom. The King used to accept the speeches his ministers presented to him to deliver on important occasions; but he corrected and modified them; struck out some parts, and added others; and sometimes consulted the Queen on the subject. The phrase of the minister erased by the King was frequently unsuitable, and dictated by the minister's private feelings; but the King's was always the natural expression. He himself composed, three times or oftener, his famous answers to the Parliament which he banished. But in his letters he was negligent, and always incorrect. Simplicity was the characteristic of the King's style; the figurative style of M. Necker did not please him; the sarcasms of Maurepas were disagreeable to him. Unfortunate Prince! he would predict, in his observations, that if such a calamity should happen, the monarchy would be ruined; and the next day he would consent in Council to the very measure which he had condemned the day before, and which brought him nearer the brink of the precipice. — SOULAVIE, "Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI.," vol. ii.

monstrances and even sharp reproaches from the Queen, who would have chosen other amusements for her husband.¹

Austere and rigid with regard to himself alone, the King observed the laws of the Church with scrupulous exactness. He fasted and abstained throughout the whole of Lent. He thought it right that the Queen should not observe these customs with the same strictness. Though sincerely pious, the spirit of the age had disposed his mind to toleration. Turgot, Malesherbes, and Necker judged that this Prince, modest and simple in his habits, would willingly sacrifice the royal prerogative to the solid greatness of his people. His heart, in truth, disposed him towards reforms; but his prejudices and fears, and the clamours of pious and privileged persons, intimidated him, and made him abandon plans which his love for the people had suggested.

Monsieur² had more dignity of demeanour than the King; but his corpulence rendered his gait

¹ Louis XVI. saw that the art of lock-making was capable of application to a higher study. He was an excellent geographer. The most valuable and complete instrument for the study of that science was begun by his orders and under his direction. It was an immense globe of copper, which was long preserved, though unfinished, in the Mazarine library. Louis XVI. invented and had executed under his own eyes the ingenious mechanism required for this globe. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

² During his stay at Avignon, Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII., lodged with the Duc de Crillon; he refused the town-guard which was offered him, saying, "A son of France, under the roof of a Crillon, needs no guard." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

inelegant. He was fond of pageantry and magnificence. He cultivated the *belles lettres*, and under assumed names often contributed verses to the *Mercury* and other papers.

His wonderful memory was the handmaid of his wit, furnishing him with the happiest quotations. He knew by heart a varied repertoire, from the finest passages of the Latin classics to the Latin of all the prayers, from the works of Racine to the vaudeville of "Rose et Colas."

The Comte d'Artois¹ had an agreeable countenance, was well made, skilful in bodily exercises, lively, impetuous, fond of pleasure, and very particular in his dress. Some happy observations made by him were repeated with approval, and gave a favourable idea of his heart. The Parisians liked the open and frank character of this Prince, which they considered national, and showed real affection for him.

The dominion that the Queen gained over the King's mind, the charms of a society in which Monsieur displayed his wit, and to which the Comte d'Artois gave life by the vivacity of youth, gradually softened that ruggedness of manner in Louis XVI. which a better-conducted education might have prevented. Still, this defect often showed itself, and, in spite of his extreme simplicity, the King inspired those who had occasion to speak to him with diffi-

¹ Afterwards Charles X.

dence. Courtiers, submissive in the presence of their sovereign, are only the more ready to caricature him; with little good breeding, they called those answers they so much dreaded, *les coups de boutoir du Roi*.¹

Methodical in all his habits, the King always went to bed at eleven precisely. One evening the Queen was going with her usual circle to a party, either at the Duc de Duras's or the Princesse de Guéménée's. The hand of the clock was slyly put forward to hasten the King's departure by a few minutes; he thought bed-time was come, retired, and found none of his attendants ready to wait on him. This joke became known in all the drawing-rooms of Versailles, and was disapproved of there. Kings have no privacy. Queens have no boudoirs. If those who are in immediate attendance upon sovereigns be not themselves disposed to transmit their private habits to posterity, the meanest valet will relate what he has seen or heard; his gossip circulates rapidly, and forms public opinion, which at length ascribes to the most august persons characters which, however untrue they may be, are almost always indelible.

NOTE. The only passion ever shown by Louis XVI. was for hunting. He was so much occupied by it that when I went up into his private closets at Versailles, after the 10th of August, I saw upon the staircase six frames, in which were seen statements of all his hunts, when Dauphin and when King. In them was detailed the number, kind, and quality of

¹ The literal meaning of the phrase "*coup de boutoir*," is a thrust from the snout of a boar.

the game he had killed at each hunting party during every month, every season, and every year of his reign.

The interior of his private apartments was thus arranged: a *salon*, ornamented with gilded mouldings, displayed the engravings which had been dedicated to him, drawings of the canals he had dug, with the model of that of Burgundy, and the plan of the cones and works of Cherbourg. The upper hall contained his collection of geographical charts, spheres, globes, and also his geographical cabinet. There were to be seen drawings of maps which he had begun, and some that he had finished. He had a clever method of washing them in. His geographical memory was prodigious. Over the hall was the turning and joining room, furnished with ingenious instruments for working in wood. He inherited some from Louis XV., and he often busied himself, with Duret's assistance, in keeping them clean and bright. Above was the library of books published during his reign. The prayer books and manuscript books of Anne of Brittany, François I., the later Valois, Louis XIV., Louis XV., and the Dauphin formed the great hereditary library of the Château. Louis XVI. placed separately, in two apartments communicating with each other, the works of his own time, including a complete collection of Didot's editions, in vellum, every volume enclosed in a morocco case. There were several English works, among the rest the debates of the British Parliament, in a great number of volumes in folio (this is the *Montteur* of England, a complete collection of which is so valuable and so scarce). By the side of this collection was to be seen a manuscript history of all the schemes for a descent upon that island, particularly that of Comte de Broglie. One of the presses of this cabinet was full of cardboard boxes, containing papers relative to the House of Austria, inscribed in the King's own hand: "Secret papers of my family respecting the House of Austria; papers of my family respecting the Houses of Stuart and Hanover." In an adjoining press were kept papers relative to Russia. Satirical works against Catherine II. and against Paul I. were sold in France under the name of histories; Louis XVI. collected and sealed up with his small seal the scandalous anecdotes against Catherine II., as well as the works of Rhullères, of which he had a copy, to be certain that the secret life of that Princess, which attracted the curiosity of her contemporaries, should not be made public by his means.

Above the King's private library were a forge, two anvils, and a vast number of iron tools; various common locks, well made and perfect; some secret locks, and locks ornamented with gilt copper. It was there that the infamous Gamin, who afterwards accused the King of having tried to poison him, and was rewarded for his calumny with a pension of twelve thousand livres, taught him the art of lock-making. This Gamin,

who became our guide, by order of the department and municipality of Versailles, did not, however, denounce the King on the 20th December, 1792. He had been made the confidant of that Prince in an immense number of important commissions; the King had sent him the "Red Book," from Paris, in a parcel; and the part which was concealed during the Constituent Assembly still remained so in 1793. Gamin hid it in a part of the Château inaccessible to everybody, and took it from under the shelves of a secret press before our eyes. This is a convincing proof that Louis XVI. hoped to return to his Château. When teaching Louis XVI. his trade Gamin took upon himself the tone and authority of a master. "The King was good, forbearing, timid, inquisitive, and addicted to sleep," said Gamin to me; "he was fond to excess of lock-making, and he concealed himself from the Queen and the Court to file and forge with me. In order to convey his anvil and my own backwards and forwards we were obliged to use a thousand stratagems, the history of which would never end." Above the King's and Gamin's forges and anvils was an observatory, erected upon a platform covered with lead. There, seated on an armchair, and assisted by a telescope, the King observed all that was passing in the courtyards of Versailles, the avenue of Paris, and the neighbouring gardens. He had taken a liking to Duret, one of the indoor servants of the palace, who sharpened his tools, cleaned his anvils, pasted his maps, and adjusted eye-glasses to the King's sight, who was short-sighted. This good Duret, and indeed all the indoor servants, spoke of their master with regret and affection, and with tears in their eyes.

The King was born weak and delicate; but from the age of twenty-four he possessed a robust constitution, inherited from his mother, who was of the House of Saxe, celebrated for generations for its robustness. There were two men in Louis XVI., *the man of knowledge and the man of will*. The King knew the history of his own family and of the first houses of France perfectly. He composed the instructions for M. de la Peyrouse's voyage round the world, which the minister thought were drawn up by several members of the Academy of Sciences. His memory retained an infinite number of names and situations. He remembered quantities and numbers wonderfully. One day an account was presented to him in which the minister had ranked among the expenses an item inserted in the account of the preceding year. "There is a double charge," said the King; "bring me last year's account, and I will show it yet there." When the King was perfectly master of the details of any matter, and saw injustice, he was obdurate even to harshness. Then he would be obeyed instantly, in order to be sure that he was obeyed.

But in important affairs of state the *man of will* was not to be found. Louis XVI. was upon the throne exactly what those weak temperaments

whom nature has rendered incapable of an opinion are in society. In his pusillanimity, he gave his confidence to a minister; and although amidst various counsels he often knew which was the best, he never had the resolution to say, "I prefer the opinion of such a one." Herein originated the misfortunes of the State.—SOULAVIE's "Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI.," vol. ii.

CHAPTER VII.

Severe Winter.—The Princesse de Lamballe Appointed Superintendent of the Household.—The Comtesse Jules de Polignac Appears at Court.—M. de Vaudreuil.—Duc and Duchesse de Duras.—Fashionable Games.

THE winter following the confinement of the Comtesse d'Artois was very severe; the recollections of the pleasure which sleighing-parties had given the Queen in her childhood made her wish to introduce similar ones in France. This amusement had already been known in that Court, as was proved by sleighs being found in the stables which had been used by the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI. Some were constructed for the Queen in a more modern style. The Princes also ordered several; and in a few days there was a tolerable number of these vehicles. They were driven by the princes and noblemen of the Court. The noise of the bells and balls with which the harness of the horses was furnished, the elegance and whiteness of their plumes, the varied forms of the carriages, the gold with which they were all ornamented, rendered these parties delightful to the eye. The winter was very favourable to them, the snow

remaining on the ground nearly six weeks; the drives in the park afforded a pleasure shared by the spectators.¹ No one imagined that any blame could attach to so innocent an amusement. But the party were tempted to extend their drives as far as the Champs Elysées; a few sleighs even crossed the boulevards; the ladies being masked, the Queen's enemies took the opportunity of saying that she had traversed the streets of Paris in a sleigh.

This became a matter of moment. The public discovered in it a predilection for the habits of Vienna; but all that Marie Antoinette did was criticised.

Sleigh-driving, savouring of the Northern Courts, had no favour among the Parisians. The Queen was informed of this; and although all the sleighs were preserved, and several subsequent winters lent themselves to the amusement, she would not resume it.

It was at the time of the sleighing-parties that the Queen became intimately acquainted with the Princesse de Lamballe, who made her appearance in them wrapped in fur, with all the brilliancy and freshness of the age of twenty,—the emblem of spring, peeping

¹ Louis XVI., touched with the wretched condition of the poor of Versailles during the winter of 1776, had several cart-loads of wood distributed among them. Seeing one day a file of those vehicles passing by, while several noblemen were preparing to be drawn swiftly over the ice, he uttered these memorable words: "Gentlemen, here are my sleighs!"
—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Princesse de Lamballe.
Original Etching by Mercier.



from under sable and ermine. Her situation, moreover, rendered her peculiarly interesting; married, when she was scarcely past childhood, to a young prince, who ruined himself by the contagious example of the Duc d'Orléans, she had had nothing to do from the time of her arrival in France but to weep. A widow at eighteen, and childless, she lived with the Duc de Penthièvre as an adopted daughter. She had the tenderest respect and attachment for that venerable Prince; but the Queen, though doing justice to his virtues, saw that the Duc de Penthièvre's way of life, whether at Paris or at his country-seat, could neither afford his young daughter-in-law the amusements suited to her time of life, nor ensure her in the future an establishment such as she was deprived of by her widowhood. She determined, therefore, to establish her at Versailles; and for her sake revived the office of superintendent, which had been discontinued at Court since the death of Mademoiselle de Clermont. It is said that Maria Leczinska had decided that this place should continue vacant, the superintendent having so extensive a power in the houses of queens as to be frequently a restraint upon their inclinations. Differences which soon took place between Marie Antoinette and the Princesse de Lamballe respecting the official prerogatives of the latter, proved that the wife of Louis XV. had acted judiciously in abolishing the office; but a kind of treaty

made between the Queen and the Princess smoothed all difficulties. The blame for too strong an assertion of claims fell upon a secretary of the superintendent, who had been her adviser; and everything was so arranged that a firm friendship existed between these two Princesses down to the disastrous period which terminated their career.

Notwithstanding the enthusiasm which the splendour, grace, and kindness of the Queen generally inspired, secret intrigues continued in operation against her. A short time after the ascension of Louis XVI. to the throne, the minister of the King's household was informed that a most offensive libel against the Queen was about to appear. The lieutenant of police deputed a man named Goupil, a police inspector, to trace this libel; he came soon after to say that he had found out the place where the work was being printed, and that it was at a country house near Yverdun. He had already got possession of two sheets, which contained the most atrocious calumnies, conveyed with a degree of art which might make them very dangerous to the Queen's reputation. Goupil said that he could obtain the rest, but that he should want a considerable sum for that purpose. Three thousand louis were given him, and very soon afterwards he brought the whole manuscript and all that had been printed to the lieutenant of police. He received a thousand louis more as a reward for his

address and zeal ; and a much more important office was about to be given him, when another spy, envious of Goupil's good fortune, gave information that Goupil himself was the author of the libel ; that, ten years before, he had been put into the Bicêtre for swindling ; and that Madame Goupil had been only three years out of the Salpêtrière, where she had been placed under another name. This Madame Goupil was very pretty and very intriguing ; she had found means to form an intimacy with Cardinal de Rohan, whom she led, it is said, to hope for a reconciliation with the Queen. All this affair was hushed up ; but it shows that it was the Queen's fate to be incessantly attacked by the meanest and most odious machinations.¹

Another woman, named Cahouette de Villers, whose husband held an office in the Treasury, being very irregular in conduct, and of a scheming turn of mind, had a mania for appearing in the eyes of her friends at Paris as a person in favour at Court, to which she was not entitled by either birth or office. During the latter years of the life of Louis XV. she had made many dupes, and picked up considerable sums by passing herself off as the King's mistress. The fear of irritating Madame du Barry was, according to her, the only thing which prevented her enjoying

¹ Readers wishing for fuller details of Goupil's manoeuvres and their detection may consult "*La Bastille Dévoilée*." The account contained there is too long for quotation here.

that title openly. She came regularly to Versailles, kept herself concealed in a furnished lodging, and her dupes imagined she was secretly summoned to Court.

This woman formed the scheme of getting admission, if possible, to the presence of the Queen, or at least causing it to be believed that she had done so. She adopted as her lover Gabriel de Saint Charles, intendant of her Majesty's finances,—an office, the privileges of which were confined to the right of entering the Queen's apartment on Sunday. Madame de Villers came every Saturday to Versailles with M. de Saint Charles, and lodged in his apartment. M. Campan was there several times. She painted tolerably well, and she requested him to do her the favour to present to the Queen a portrait of her Majesty which she had just copied. M. Campan knew the woman's character, and refused her. A few days after, he saw on her Majesty's couch the portrait which he had declined to present to her; the Queen thought it badly painted, and gave orders that it should be carried back to the Princesse de Lamballe, who had sent it to her. The ill success of the portrait did not deter the manœuvrer from following up her designs; she easily procured through M. de Saint Charles patents and orders signed by the Queen; she then set about imitating her writing, and composed a great number of notes and letters, as if written by her Majesty, in the tenderest and most

familiar style. For many months she showed them as great secrets to several of her particular friends. Afterwards, she made the Queen appear to write to her, to procure various fancy articles. Under the pretext of wishing to execute her Majesty's commissions accurately, she gave these letters to the tradesmen to read, and succeeded in having it said, in many houses, that the Queen had a particular regard for her. She then enlarged her scheme, and represented the Queen as desiring to borrow 200,000 francs which she had need of, but which she did not wish to ask of the King from his private funds. This letter, being shown to M. Beranger, *fermier-général* of the finances, took effect; he thought himself fortunate in being able to render this assistance to his sovereign, and lost no time in sending the 200,000 francs to Madame de Villers. This first step was followed by some doubts, which he communicated to people better informed than himself of what was passing at Court; they added to his uneasiness; he then went to M. de Sartine, who unravelled the whole plot. The woman was sent to St. Pelagie; and the unfortunate husband was ruined, by replacing the sum borrowed, and by paying for the jewels fraudulently purchased in the Queen's name. The forged letters were sent to her Majesty; I compared them in her presence with her own handwriting, and the only distinguishable difference was a little more regularity in the letters.

This trick, discovered and punished with prudence and without passion, produced no more sensation out of doors than that of the Inspector Goupil.

A year after the nomination of Madame de Lamballe¹ to the post of superintendent of the Queen's household, balls and quadrilles gave rise to the intimacy of her Majesty with the Comtesse Jules de Polignac. This lady really interested Marie Antoinette. She was not rich, and generally lived upon her estate at Claye. The Queen was astonished at not having seen her at Court earlier. The confession that her want of fortune had even prevented her appearance at the celebration of the marriages of the Princes added to the interest which she had inspired.

The Queen was full of consideration, and took delight in counteracting the injustice of fortune. The Countess was induced to come to Court by her husband's sister, Madame Diane de Polignac, who had been appointed lady of honour to the Comtesse d'Artois. The Comtesse Jules was really fond of a tranquil life; the impression she made at Court affected her but little; she felt only the attachment manifested for her by the Queen. I had occasion to see her from the commencement of her favour at Court; she often passed whole hours with me, while

¹ Marie Thérèse de Savoie-Carignan, born 1748, murdered September, 1792. Married Louis de Bourbon-Penthièvre, Prince de Lamballe (who died about 1767), son of the Duc de Penthièvre.

waiting for the Queen. She conversed with me freely and ingenuously about the honour, and at the same time the danger, she saw in the kindness of which she was the object. The Queen sought for the sweets of friendship; but can this gratification, so rare in any rank, exist between a Queen and a subject, — when they are surrounded, moreover, by snares laid by the artifice of courtiers? This pardonable error was fatal to the happiness of Marie Antoinette.

The retiring character of the Comtesse Jules, afterwards Duchesse de Polignac, cannot be spoken of too favourably; but if her heart was incapable of forming ambitious projects, her family and friends in her fortune beheld their own, and endeavoured to secure the favour of the Queen.¹

The Comtesse de Diane, sister of M. de Polignac, and the Baron de Besenval and M. de Vaudreuil, particular friends of the Polignac family, made use of means, the success of which was infallible. One of my friends (Comte de Moustier), who was in their secret, came to tell me that Madame de Polignac was about to quit Versailles suddenly; that she would take leave of the Queen only in writing; that the Comtesse Diane and M. de Vaudreuil had dictated her letter, and the whole affair was arranged for the purpose of stimu-

¹ The Comtesse, afterwards Duchesse de Polignac, *née* Polastron, married the Comte (in 1780 the Duc) Jules de Polignac, the father of the Prince de Polignac of Napoleon's and of Charles X.'s time. She emigrated in 1789, and died in Vienna in 1798.

lating the attachment of Marie Antoinette. The next day, when I went up to the palace, I found the Queen with a letter in her hand, which she was reading with much emotion; it was the letter from the Comtesse Jules; the Queen showed it to me. The Countess expressed in it her grief at leaving a princess who had loaded her with kindness. The narrowness of her fortune compelled her to do so; but she was much more strongly impelled by the fear that the Queen's friendship, after having raised up dangerous enemies against her, might abandon her to their hatred, and to the regret of having lost the august favour of which she was the object.

This step produced the full effect that had been expected from it. A young and sensitive queen cannot long bear the idea of contradiction. She busied herself in settling the Comtesse Jules near her, by making such a provision for her as should place her beyond anxiety. Her character suited the Queen; she had merely natural talents, no pedantry, no affectation of knowledge. She was of middle size; her complexion very fair, her eyebrows and hair dark brown, her teeth superb, her smile enchanting, and her whole person graceful. She was seen almost always in a demi-toilet, remarkable only for neatness and good taste. I do not think I ever once saw diamonds about her, even at the climax of her fortune, when she had the rank of Duchess at Court.

I have always believed that her sincere attachment for the Queen, as much as her love of simplicity, induced her to avoid everything that might cause her to be thought a wealthy favourite. She had not one of the failings which usually accompany that position. She loved the persons who shared the Queen's affections, and was entirely free from jealousy. Marie Antoinette flattered herself that the Comtesse Jules and the Princesse de Lamballe would be her especial friends, and that she should possess a society formed according to her own taste. "I will receive them in my closet, or at Trianon," said she; "I will enjoy the comforts of private life, which exist not for us, unless we have the good sense to secure them for ourselves." The happiness the Queen thought to secure was destined to turn to vexation. All those courtiers who were not admitted to this intimacy became so many jealous and vindictive enemies.

It was necessary to make a suitable provision for the Countess. The place of first equerry, in reversion after the Comte de Tessé, given to Comte Jules unknown to the titular holder, displeased the family of Noailles. This family had just sustained another mortification, the appointment of the Princesse de Lamballe having in some degree rendered necessary the resignation of the Comtesse de Noailles, whose husband was thereupon made a marshal of France. The Princesse de Lamballe, although she did not

quarrel with the Queen, was alarmed at the establishment of the Comtesse Jules at Court, and did not form, as her Majesty had hoped, a part of that intimate society, which was in turn composed of Mesdames Jules and Diane de Polignac, d'Andlau and de Châlon, and Messieurs de Guignes, de Coigny, d'Adhémar, de Besenval, lieutenant-colonel of the Swiss, de Polignac, de Vaudreuil, and de Guiche; the Prince de Ligne and the Duke of Dorset, the English ambassador, were also admitted.

It was a long time before the Comtesse Jules maintained any great state at Court. The Queen contented herself with giving her very fine apartments at the top of the marble staircase. The salary of first equerry, the trifling emoluments derived from M. de Polignac's regiment, added to their slender patrimony, and perhaps some small pension, at that time formed the whole fortune of the favourite. I never saw the Queen make her a present of value; I was even astonished one day at hearing her Majesty mention, with pleasure, that the Countess had gained ten thousand francs in the lottery. "She was in great want of it," added the Queen.

Thus the Polignacs were not settled at Court in any degree of splendour which could justify complaints from others, and the substantial favours bestowed upon that family were less envied than the intimacy between them and their *protégés*

and the Queen. Those who had no hope of entering the circle of the Comtesse Jules were made jealous by the opportunities of advancement it afforded.

However, at the time I speak of, the society around the Comtesse Jules was fully engaged in gratifying the young Queen. Of this the Marquis de Vaudreuil was a conspicuous member; he was a brilliant man, the friend and protector of men of letters and celebrated artists.¹

The Baron de Besenval added to the bluntness of

¹ M. de Vaudreuil himself pursued several of the fine arts. His voice was very pleasing, and he was a good musician. These accomplishments made him sought after, from his earliest entrance into society. The first time he visited Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg, that lady said to him after supper: "I am told, monsieur, that you sing very well. I should be delighted to hear you. But if you do oblige me so far, pray do not sing any fine piece; no cantata, but some street ballad,—just a mere street song. I like a natural style,—something lively,—something cheerful." M. de Vaudreuil begged leave to sing a street ballad then much in vogue. He did not know that Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg was, before her widowhood, Comtesse de Bouffiers. He sang out with a full and sonorous voice the first line of the couplet, beginning,

"When Bouffiers first was seen at Court,"

The company immediately began coughing and sneezing. M. de Vaudreuil went on:

"Venus's self shone less beauteous than she did."

The noise and confusion increased. But after the third line,

"To please her all eagerly sought,"

M. de Vaudreuil, perceiving that all eyes were fixed upon him, paused.

"Pray go on, monsieur," said Madame la Maréchale, singing the last line herself:

"And too well in his turn each succeeded."

M. de Besenval's remarks respecting Madame de Luxembourg render the anecdote not improbable. But perhaps, in such a delicate dilemma, she

the Swiss all the adroitness of a French courtier. His fifty years and gray hairs made him enjoy among women the confidence inspired by mature age, although he had not given up the thought of love affairs. He talked of his native mountains with enthusiasm. He would at any time sing the "Ranz des Vaches" with tears in his eyes, and was the best story-teller in the Comtesse Jules's circle. The last new song or *bon mot* and the gossip of the day were the sole topics of conversation in the Queen's parties. Wit was banished from them. The Comtesse Diane, more inclined to literary pursuits than her sister-in-law, one day recommended her to read the "Iliad" and "Odyssey." The latter replied, laughing, that she was

may be considered as having given a proof of presence of mind rather than of impudence.

According to the version of the Marquis de Gouffier, who was present on this occasion, the conversation turned on Time's ravages on beauty, when M. de Vaudreuil said, turning towards Madame de Luxembourg, "As to you, madame, he has spared you; we still see that beauty which turned all the heads at Court, and has been celebrated by our best poets." "Yes," said the old lady, gaily, "I remember when I first came out, there were a few songs written in my praise; there was this, for instance," and she began singing:

"When Bouffiers first was seen at Court,
Venus's self shone less beauteous than she did.
To please her all eagerly sought—"

Here she stopped, and did not give the last line:

"And too well in his turn each succeeded."

"Go on, Madame la Maréchale," said De Vaudreuil. "Ah!" said she, smiling, "all that was so long ago that I remember no more of it."—
NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

perfectly acquainted with the Greek poet, and said to prove it:

“Homère était aveugle et jouait du hautbois.”¹

(Homer was blind and played on the hautboy.)

The Queen found this sort of humour very much to her taste, and said that no pedant should ever be her friend.

Before the Queen fixed her assemblies at Madame de Polignac's, she occasionally passed the evening at the house of the Duc and Duchesse de Duras, where a brilliant party of young persons met together. They introduced a taste for trifling games, such as question and answer, *guerre panpan*, blind man's buff, and especially a game called *descampativos*. The people of Paris, always criticising, but always imitating the customs of the Court, were infected with the mania for these childish sports. Madame de Genlis, sketching the follies of the day in one of her plays, speaks of these famous *descampativos*; and also of the rage for making a friend, called the *inséparable*, until a whim or the slightest difference might occasion a total rupture.

¹ This lively repartee of the Duchesse de Polignac is a droll imitation of a line in the “*Mercur Galant*.” In the quarrel scene one of the lawyers says to his brother quill: “Ton père était aveugle et jouait du hautbois.”

CHAPTER VIII.

The Duc de Choiseul Returns to Court. — The Queen Obtains a Pension of 1,200 Francs for Chamfort. — She Invites Gluck to France and Patronises Music. — Encouragement Given to the Art of Printing. — Turgot. — M. de Saint-Germain. — Amusements at Court. — Particulars of the Household. — Masked Balls at the Opéra. — The Queen Goes There in a *Fiacre*; Slandorous Reports. — The Heron Plume. — The Duc de Lauzun. — The Queen's Attachment to the Princesse de Lamballe and the Duchesse de Polignac. — Anecdote of the Abbé de Vermond.

THE Duc de Choiseul had reappeared at Court on the ceremony of the King's coronation for the first time after his disgrace under Louis XV. in 1770. The state of public feeling on the subject gave his friends hope of seeing him again in administration, or in the Council of State; but the opposite party was too firmly seated at Versailles, and the young Queen's influence was outweighed, in the mind of the King, by long-standing prejudices; she therefore gave up for ever her attempt to reinstate the Duke. Thus this Princess, who has been described as so ambitious, and so strenuously supporting the interest of the House of Austria, failed twice in the only scheme which

could forward the views constantly attributed to her; and spent the whole of her reign surrounded by enemies of herself and her house.

Marie Antoinette took little pains to promote literature and the fine arts. She had been annoyed in consequence of having ordered a performance of the "Connétable de Bourbon," on the celebration of the marriage of Madame Clotilde with the Prince of Piedmont. The Court and the people of Paris censured as indecorous the naming characters in the piece after the reigning family, and that with which the new alliance was formed.¹ The reading of this piece by the Comte de Guibert in the Queen's closet had produced in her Majesty's circle that sort of enthusiasm which obscures the judgment. She promised herself she would have no more readings. Yet, at the request of M. de Cubières, the King's equerry, the Queen agreed to hear the reading of a comedy written by his brother. She collected her intimate circle, Messieurs de Coigny, de Vaudreuil, de Besenval, Mesdames de Polignac, de Châlon, etc., and to increase the number of judges, she admitted the two Parnys,² the Chevalier de Bertin, my father-in-law, and myself.

¹ The Court could hardly approve a composition in which the Constable above all things desires "the rare pleasure of humbling a king."
— NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

² The Chevalier de Parny was already known by his erotic poems, and the Chevalier de Bertin by some clever verses. — Molé was an actor who was, during thirty years, the delight of the Théâtre Français. He preceded Fleury, and took the same line of character. — MADAME CAMFAN.

Molé read for the author. I never could satisfy myself by what magic the skilful reader gained our unanimous approbation of a ridiculous work. Surely the delightful voice of Molé, by awakening our recollection of the dramatic beauties of the French stage, prevented the wretched lines of Dorat Cubières from striking on our ears. I can assert that the exclamation *Charming! charming!* repeatedly interrupted the reader. The piece was admitted for performance at Fontainebleau; and for the first time the King had the curtain dropped before the end of the play. It was called the "Dramomane" or "Dramaturge." All the characters died of eating poison in a pie. The Queen, highly disconcerted at having recommended this absurd production, announced that she would never hear another reading; and this time she kept her word.

The tragedy of "Mustapha and Zéangir," by M. de Chamfort, was highly successful at the Court theatre at Fontainebleau. The Queen procured the author a pension of 1,200 francs, but his play failed on being performed at Paris.

The spirit of opposition which prevailed in that city delighted in reversing the verdicts of the Court. The Queen determined never again to give any marked countenance to new dramatic works. She reserved her patronage for musical composers, and in a few years their art arrived at a perfection it had never before attained in France.

The Parisian Bonne.

Photogravure by Goupil, from painting by C. Delort.



Peint par C. Delort.

Photographie Goupil & C^{ie}

It was solely to gratify the Queen that the manager of the Opéra brought the first company of comic actors to Paris. Gluck, Piccini, and Sacchini were attracted there in succession. These eminent composers were treated with great distinction at Court. Immediately on his arrival in France, Gluck was admitted to the Queen's toilet, and she talked to him all the time he remained with her. She asked him one day whether he had nearly brought his grand opera of "Armide" to a conclusion, and whether it pleased him. Gluck replied very coolly, in his German accent, "Madame, it will soon be finished, and really it will be *superb*." There was a great outcry against the confidence with which the composer had spoken of one of his own productions.¹ The Queen defended him warmly; she insisted that he could not be ignorant of the merit of his works; that he well knew they were generally admired, and that no doubt he was afraid lest a modesty, merely dictated by politeness, should look like affectation in him.

¹ Gluck often had to deal with self-sufficiency equal to his own. He was very reluctant to introduce long ballets into "Iphigenia." Vestris deeply regretted that the opera was not terminated by a piece they called a *chaconne*, in which he displayed all his power. He complained to Gluck about it. Gluck, who treated his art with all the dignity it merits, replied that in so interesting a subject dancing would be misplaced. Being pressed another time by Vestris on the same subject, "A *chaconne*! A *chaconne*!" roared out the enraged musician; "we must describe the Greeks; and had the Greeks *chaconnes*?" "They had not?" returned the astonished dancer; "why, then, so much the worse for them!"—
NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The Queen did not confine her admiration to the lofty style of the French and Italian operas; she greatly valued Grétry's music, so well adapted to the spirit and feeling of the words. A great deal of the poetry set to music by Grétry is by Marmontel. The day after the first performance of "Zemira and Azor," Marmontel and Grétry were presented to the Queen as she was passing through the gallery of Fontainebleau to go to mass. The Queen congratulated Grétry on the success of the new opera, and told him that she had dreamed of the enchanting effect of the trio by Zemira's father and sisters behind the magic mirror. Grétry, in a transport of joy, took Marmontel in his arms, "Ah! my friend," cried he, "excellent music may be made of this." "And execrable words," coolly observed Marmontel, to whom her Majesty had not addressed a single compliment.

The most indifferent artists were permitted to have the honour of painting the Queen. A full-length portrait, representing her in all the pomp of royalty, was exhibited in the gallery of Versailles. This picture, which was intended for the Court of Vienna, was executed by a man who does not deserve even to be named, and disgusted all people of taste. It seemed as if this art had, in France, retrograded several centuries.

The Queen had not that enlightened judgment, or

even that mere taste, which enables princes to foster and protect great talents. She confessed frankly that she saw no merit in any portrait beyond the likeness. When she went to the Louvre, she would run hastily over all the little "genre" pictures, and come out, as she acknowledged, without having once raised her eyes to the grand compositions.

There is no good portrait of the Queen, save that by Werthmüller, chief painter to the King of Sweden, which was sent to Stockholm, and that by Madame Lebrun, which was saved from the revolutionary fury by the commissioners for the care of the furniture at Versailles.¹ The composition of the latter picture resembles that of Henriette of France, the wife of the unfortunate Charles I., painted by Vandyke. Like Marie Antoinette, she is seated, surrounded by her children, and that resemblance adds to the melancholy interest raised by this beautiful production.

While admitting that the Queen gave no direct encouragement to any art but that of music, I should be wrong to pass over in silence the patronage conferred by her and the Princes, brothers of the King, on the art of printing.²

¹ A sketch of very great interest made when the Queen was in the Temple and discovered many years afterwards there, recently reproduced in the memoirs of the Marquise de Tourzel (Paris, Pion), is the last authentic portrait of the unhappy Queen. See also the catalogue of portraits made by Lord Ronald Gower.

² In 1790 the King gave a proof of his particular good-will to the book-selling trade. A company consisting of the first Parisian booksellers,

To Marie Antoinette we are indebted for a splendid quarto edition of the works of Metastasio; to Monsieur, the King's brother, for a quarto Tasso, embellished with engravings after Cochin; and to the Comte d'Artois for a small collection of select works, which is considered one of the *chef d'œuvres* of the press of the celebrated Didot.

In 1775, on the death of the Maréchal du Muy, the ascendancy obtained by the sect of innovators occasioned M. de Saint-Germain to be recalled to Court and made Minister of War. His first care was the destruction of the King's military household establishment, an imposing and effectual rampart round the sovereign power.

When Chancellor Maupeou obtained from Louis XV. the destruction of the Parliament and the exile of all the ancient magistrates, the Mousquetaires were charged with the execution of the commission for this purpose; and at the stroke of midnight, the presidents and members were all arrested, each by two Mousquetaires. In the spring of 1775 a popular insurrection had taken place in consequence of the high price of bread. M. Turgot's new regulation,

being on the eve of stopping payment, succeeded in laying before the King a statement of their distressed situation. The monarch was affected by it; he took from the civil list the sum of which the society stood in immediate need, and became security for the repayment of the remainder of the 1,200,000 livres, which they wanted to borrow, and for the repayment of which he fixed no particular time.

which permitted unlimited trade in corn, was either its cause or the pretext for it;¹ and the King's household troops again rendered the greatest services to public tranquillity.

I have never been able to discover the true cause of the support given to M. de Saint-Germain's policy by the Queen, unless in the marked favour shown to the captains and officers of the Body Guards, who by this reduction became the only soldiers of their rank entrusted with the safety of the sovereign; or else in the Queen's strong prejudice against the Duc d'Aiguillon, then commander of the light-horse. M. de Saint-Germain, however, retained fifty *gens d'armes* and fifty light-horse to form a royal escort on state occasions; but in 1787 the King reduced both these military bodies. The Queen then said with satisfaction that at last she should see no more red coats in the gallery of Versailles.

From 1775 to 1781 were the gayest years of the Queen's life. In the little journeys to Choisy, performances frequently took place at the theatre twice in one day: grand opera and French or Italian comedy at the usual hour; and at eleven at night they

¹ Liberty and economy were M. Turgot's two principles. At Court he insisted chiefly on the application of the last. His numerous retrenchments offended the nobles and clergy. A female relative of the minister once asked a bishop whether it was not allowable to keep Easter and the Jubilee at the same time. "Well, madame," replied the prelate, "we live in economical times—I think it can be done." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

returned to the theatre for parodies in which the best actors of the Opéra presented themselves in whimsical parts and costumes. The celebrated dancer Guimard always took the leading characters in the latter performance; she danced better than she acted; her extreme leanness, and her weak, hoarse voice added to the burlesque in the parodied characters of Ernelinde and Iphigénie.

The most magnificent fête ever given to the Queen was one prepared for her by Monsieur, the King's brother, at Brunoy. That Prince did me the honour to admit me, and I followed her Majesty into the gardens, where she found in the first copse knights in full armour asleep at the foot of trees, on which hung their spears and shields. The absence of the beauties who had incited the nephews of Charlemagne and the gallants of that period to lofty deeds was supposed to occasion this lethargic slumber. But when the Queen appeared at the entrance of the copse they were on foot in an instant, and melodious voices announced their eagerness to display their valour. They then hastened into a vast arena, magnificently decorated in the exact style of the ancient tournaments. Fifty dancers dressed as pages presented to the knights twenty-five superb black horses, and twenty-five of a dazzling whiteness, all most richly caparisoned. The party led by Augustus Vestris wore the Queen's colours. Picq, ballet-master at the Russian Court,

commanded the opposing band. There was running at the negro's head, tilting, and, lastly, combats *d'outrance*, perfectly well imitated. Although the spectators were aware that the Queen's colours could not but be victorious, they did not the less enjoy the apparent uncertainty.

Nearly all the agreeable women of Paris were ranged upon the steps which surrounded the area of the tourney. The Queen, surrounded by the royal family and the whole Court, was placed beneath an elevated canopy. A play, followed by a ballet-pantomime and a ball, terminated the fête. Fireworks and illuminations were not spared. Finally, from a prodigiously high scaffold, placed on a rising ground, the words *Vive Louis! Vive Marie Antoinette!* were shown in the air in the midst of a very dark but calm night.

Pleasure was the sole pursuit of every one of this young family, with the exception of the King. Their love of it was perpetually encouraged by a crowd of those officious people who, by anticipating the desires and even the passions of princes, find means of showing their zeal, and hope to gain or maintain favour for themselves.

Who would have dared to check the amusements of a queen, young, lively, and handsome? A mother or a husband alone would have had the right to do it; and the King threw no impediment in the way of

Marie Antoinette's inclinations. His long indifference had been followed by admiration and love. He was a slave to all the wishes of the Queen, who, delighted with the happy change in the heart and habits of the King, did not sufficiently conceal the ascendancy she was gaining over him.

The King went to bed every night at eleven precisely; he was very methodical, and nothing was allowed to interfere with his rules. The noise which the Queen unavoidably made when she returned very late from the evenings which she spent with the Princesse de Guéménée or the Duc de Duras, at last annoyed the King, and it was amicably agreed that the Queen should apprise him when she intended to sit up late. He then began to sleep in his own apartment, which had never before happened from the time of their marriage.

During the winter the Queen attended the Opéra balls with a single lady of the palace, and always found there Monsieur and the Comte d'Artois. Her people concealed their liveries under gray cloth great-coats. She never thought she was recognized, while all the time she was known to the whole assembly, from the first moment she entered the theatre; they pretended, however, not to recognise her, and some masquerade manœuvre was always adopted to give her the pleasure of fancying herself incognito.

Louis XVI. determined once to accompany the

Queen to a masked ball; it was agreed that the King should hold not only the *grand* but the *petit coucher*, as if actually going to bed. The Queen went to his apartment through the inner corridors of the palace, followed by one of her women with a black domino; she assisted him to put it on, and they went alone to the chapel court, where a carriage waited for them, with the captain of the Guard of the quarter, and a lady of the palace. The King was but little amused, spoke only to two or three persons, who knew him immediately, and found nothing to admire at the masquerade but Punches and Harlequins, which served as a joke against him for the royal family, who often amused themselves with laughing at him about it.

An event, simple in itself, brought dire suspicion upon the Queen. She was going out one evening with the Duchesse de Luynes, lady of the palace, when her carriage broke down at the entrance into Paris; she was obliged to alight; the Duchess led her into a shop, while a footman called a *fiacre*. As they were masked, if they had but known how to keep silence, the event would never have been known; but to ride in a *fiacre* is so unusual an adventure for a queen that she had hardly entered the Opéra-house when she could not help saying to some persons whom she met there: "That I should be in a *fiacre*! Is it not droll?"

From that moment all Paris was informed of the adventure of the *fiacre*. It was said that everything connected with it was mysterious; that the Queen had kept an assignation in a private house with the Duc de Coigny. He was indeed very well received at Court, but equally so by the King and Queen. These accusations of gallantry once set afloat, there were no longer any bounds to the calumnies circulated at Paris. If, during the chase or at cards, the Queen spoke to Lord Edward Dillon, De Lambertye, or others, they were so many favoured lovers. The people of Paris did not know that none of those young persons were admitted into the Queen's private circle of friends; the Queen went about Paris in disguise, and had made use of a *fiacre*; and a single instance of levity gives room for the suspicion of others.

Conscious of innocence, and well knowing that all about her must do justice to her private life, the Queen spoke of these reports with contempt, contenting herself with the supposition that some folly in the young men mentioned had given rise to them. She therefore left off speaking to them or even looking at them. Their vanity took alarm at this, and revenge induced them either to say, or to leave others to think, that they were unfortunate enough to please no longer. Other young coxcombs, placing themselves near the private box which the Queen occupied incognito when she attended the public theatre at Versailles, had the

presumption to imagine that they were noticed by her; and I have known such notions entertained merely on account of the Queen's requesting one of those gentlemen to inquire behind the scenes whether it would be long before the commencement of the second piece.

The list of persons received into the Queen's closet which I gave in the preceding chapter was placed in the hands of the ushers of the chamber by the Princesse de Lamballe; and the persons there enumerated could present themselves to enjoy the distinction only on those days when the Queen chose to be with her intimates in a private manner; and this was only when she was slightly indisposed. People of the first rank at Court sometimes requested special audiences of her; the Queen then received them in a room within that called the closet of the women on duty, and these women announced them in her Majesty's apartment.

The Duc de Lauzun¹ had a good deal of wit, and chivalrous manners. The Queen was accustomed to see him at the King's suppers, and at the house of the Princesse de Guéménée, and always showed him attention. One day he made his appearance at Madame de Guéménée's in uniform, and with the most magnificent plume of white heron's feathers that

¹ Armand Louis, Duc de Lauzun (1747-1793), afterwards (1788) Duc de Biron; commanded the army of the Rhine in 1792, and against the Venetians in 1793 as Général Biron, but was guillotined in 1793.

it was possible to behold. The Queen admired the plume, and he offered it to her through the *Princesse de Guéménée*. As he had worn it the Queen had not imagined that he could think of giving it to her; much embarrassed with the present which she had, as it were, drawn upon herself, she did not like to refuse it, nor did she know whether she ought to make one in return; afraid, if she did give anything, of giving either too much or too little, she contented herself with once letting *M. de Lauzun* see her adorned with the plume. In his secret "*Memoirs*" the Duke attaches an importance to his present, which proves him utterly unworthy of an honour accorded only to his name and rank.¹

¹ We may perhaps compare the *Duc de Lauzun's* version of this incident (not, however, to be found in the edition of his "*Memoirs*" published since those of *Madame Campan* were compiled) with *Madame Campan's* narrative. "*Madame de Guéménée*," he says, "came up to me and asked in an undertone, laughing, 'Are you very much attached to a certain white heron plume which was in your helmet when you took leave? The Queen is dying for it; will you refuse it her?' I replied that I should not dare to offer it to her, but that I should be most happy if she would condescend to receive it from *Madame de Guéménée*. I sent to Paris for it, and *Madame de Guéménée* gave it to the Queen the next evening. She wore it on the following day, and at dinner she asked me what I thought of her head-dress. I replied that I liked it very much. 'I never,' said she, with infinite affability, 'saw myself so becomingly dressed before.' It certainly would have been better if she had not said anything about it, for the *Duc de Coigny* took notice both of the feather and the phrase. He asked whence the plume came. The Queen said, with some embarrassment, that I had brought it to *Madame de Guéménée* from my travels, and that she had given it to her. The *Duc de Coigny* told *Madame de Guéménée* in the evening, with much asperity, that nothing could be more indecorous than the footing I was on with the Queen; that to pay such attention publicly was a thing unheard of; and

A short time afterwards he solicited an audience; the Queen granted it, as she would have done to any other courtier of equal rank. I was in the room adjoining that in which he was received; a few minutes after his arrival the Queen reopened the door, and said aloud, and in an angry tone of voice, "Go, monsieur." M. de Lauzun bowed low, and withdrew. The Queen was much agitated. She said to me: "That man shall never again come within my doors." A few years before the Revolution of 1789 the Maréchal de Biron died. The Duc de Lauzun, heir to his name, aspired to the important post of colonel of the regiment of French guards. The Queen, however, procured it for the Duc du Châtelet. The Duc de Biron espoused the cause of the Duc d'Orléans, and became one of the most violent enemies of Marie Antoinette.

It is with reluctance that I enter minutely on a defence of the Queen against two infamous accusations with which libellers have dared to swell their venomous volumes. I mean the unworthy suspicions of too strong an attachment for the Comte d'Artois, and of the motives for the tender friendship which subsisted between the Queen, the Princesse de Lamballe, and the Duchesse de Polignac. I do not believe

that it was incredible that she should look as if she approved of it. What he said was not well received, and he began to contrive means to get me out of the way." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

that the Comte d'Artois was, during his own youth and that of the Queen, so much smitten as has been said with the loveliness of his sister-in-law ; I can affirm that I always saw that Prince maintain the most respectful demeanour towards the Queen ; that she always spoke of his good-nature and cheerfulness with that freedom which attends only the purest sentiments ; and that none of those about the Queen ever saw in the affection she manifested towards the Comte d'Artois more than that of a kind and tender sister for her youngest brother. As to the intimate connection between Marie Antoinette and the ladies I have named, it never had, nor could have, any other motive than the very innocent wish to secure herself two friends in the midst of a numerous Court ; and notwithstanding this intimacy, that tone of respect observed by persons of the most exalted rank towards majesty never ceased to be maintained.

The Queen, much occupied with the society of Madame de Polignac, and an unbroken series of amusements, found less time for the Abbé de Vermond ; he therefore resolved to retire from Court. The world did him the honour to believe that he had hazarded remonstrances upon his august pupil's frivolous employment of her time, and that he considered himself, both as an ecclesiastic and as instructor, now out of place at Court. But the world was deceived : his dissatisfaction arose purely from the favour shown

to the Comtesse Jules. After a fortnight's absence we saw him at Versailles again, resuming his usual functions.

The Queen could express herself with winning graciousness to persons who merited her praise. When M. Loustonneau was appointed to the reversion of the post of first surgeon to the King, he came to make his acknowledgments. He was much beloved by the poor, to whom he had chiefly devoted his talents, spending nearly thirty thousand francs a year on indigent sufferers. The Queen replied to his thanks by saying: "You are satisfied, Monsieur; but I am far from being so with the inhabitants of Versailles. On the news of your appointment the town should have been illuminated." "How so, Madame?" asked the astonished surgeon, who was very modest. "Why," replied the Queen, "if the poor whom you have succoured for the past twenty years had each placed a single candle in their windows it would have been the most beautiful illumination ever witnessed."

The Queen did not limit her kindness to friendly words. There was frequently seen in the apartments of Versailles a veteran captain of the grenadiers of France, called the Chevalier d'Orville, who for four years had been soliciting from the Minister of War the post of major, or of King's lieutenant. He was known to be very poor; but he supported his lot

without complaining of this vexatious delay in rewarding his honourable services. He regularly attended the Maréchal de Ségur, at the hour appointed for receiving the numerous solicitations in his department. One day the Marshal said to him: "You are still at Versailles, M. d'Orville?" "Monsieur," he replied, "you may observe that by this board of the flooring where I regularly place myself; it is already worn down several lines by the weight of my body." The Queen frequently stood at the window of her bedchamber to observe with her glass the people walking in the park. Sometimes she inquired the names of those who were unknown to her. One day she saw the Chevalier d'Orville passing, and asked me the name of that knight of Saint Louis, whom she had seen everywhere for a long time past. I knew who he was, and related his history. "That must be put an end to," said the Queen, with some vivacity. "Such an example of indifference is calculated to discourage our soldiers." Next day, in crossing the gallery to go to mass, the Queen perceived the Chevalier d'Orville; she went directly towards him. The poor man fell back in the recess of a window, looking to the right and left to discover the person whom the Queen was seeking, when she thus addressed him: "M. d'Orville, you have been several years at Versailles, soliciting a majority or a King's lieutenancy. You must have very powerless patrons." "I have none, Madame,"

replied the Chevalier, in great confusion. "Well! I will take you under my protection. To-morrow at the same hour be here with a petition, and a memorial of your services." A fortnight after, M. d'Orville was appointed King's lieutenant, either at La Rochelle or at Rochefort.¹

¹ Louis XVI. vied with his Queen in benevolent actions of this kind. An old officer had in vain solicited a pension during the administration of the Duc de Choiseul. He returned to the charge in the times of the Marquis de Montemard and the Duc d'Aiguillon. He urged his claims to Comte du Muy, who made a note of them. Tired of so many fruitless efforts, he at last appeared at the King's supper, and, having placed himself so as to be seen and heard, cried out at a moment when silence prevailed, "Sire." The people near him said, "What are you about? This is not the way to speak to the King." "I fear nothing," said he, and raising his voice, repeated, "Sire." The King, much surprised, looked at him and said, "What do you want, monsieur." "Sire," answered he, "I am seventy years of age; I have served your Majesty more than fifty years, and I am dying for want." "Have you a memorial?" replied the King. "Yes, Sire, I have." "Give it to me;" and his Majesty took it without saying anything more. Next morning he was sent for by the King, who said, "Monsieur, I grant you an annuity of 1,500 livres out of my privy purse, and you may go and receive the first year's payment, which is now due." ("Secret Correspondence of the Court: Reign of Louis XVI.") The King preferred to spend money in charity rather than in luxury or magnificence. Once during his absence, M. d'Angivillers caused an unused room in the King's apartment to be repaired at a cost of 80,000 francs. On his return the King made Versailles resound with complaints against M. d'Angivillers: "With that sum I could have made thirty families happy," he said. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER IX.

Joseph II.'s Visit to France. — His Reception at the Opéra. — Fête Given to Him by the Queen at Trianon. — The Queen *Enceinte*. — Voltaire's Return to Paris. — Duel between the Comte d'Artois and the Duc de Bourbon. — Return of the Chevalier d'Eon to France. — Particulars Relative to His Missions, and the Causes of His Disguise. — Night Promenades upon the Terrace of Trianon. — Couplets against the Queen. — Indignation of Louis XVI. — Birth of Madame.

FROM the time of Louis XVI.'s accession to the throne, the Queen had been expecting a visit from her brother, the Emperor Joseph II. That Prince was the constant theme of her discourse. She boasted of his intelligence, his love of occupation, his military knowledge, and the perfect simplicity of his manners. Those about her Majesty ardently wished to see at Versailles a prince so worthy of his rank. At length the coming of Joseph II., under the title of Count Falkenstein, was announced, and the very day on which he would be at Versailles was mentioned. The first embraces between the Queen and her august brother took place in the presence of

all the Queen's household. The sight of their emotion was extremely affecting.

The Emperor was at first generally admired in France; learned men, well-informed officers, and celebrated artists appreciated the extent of his information. He made less impression at Court, and very little in the private circle of the King and Queen. His eccentric manners, his frankness, often degenerating into rudeness, and his evidently affected simplicity,—all these characteristics caused him to be looked upon as a prince rather singular than admirable. The Queen spoke to him about the apartment she had prepared for him in the Château; the Emperor answered that he would not accept it, and that while travelling he always lodged at a *cabaret* (that was his very expression); the Queen insisted, and assured him that he should be at perfect liberty, and placed out of the reach of noise. He replied that he knew the Château of Versailles was very large, and that so many scoundrels lived there that he could well find a place; but that his *valet de chambre* had made up his camp-bed in a lodging-house, and there he would stay.

He dined with the King and Queen, and supped with the whole family. He appeared to take an interest in the young Princesse Elisabeth, then just past childhood, and blooming in all the freshness of that age. An intended marriage between him and

this young sister of the King was reported at the time, but I believe it had no foundation in truth.

The table was still served by women only, when the Queen dined in private with the King, the royal family, or crowned heads.¹ I was present at the Queen's dinner almost every day. The Emperor would talk much and fluently; he expressed himself in French with facility, and the singularity of his expressions added a zest to his conversation. I have often heard him say that he liked *spectaculous* objects, when he meant to express such things as formed a show, or a scene worthy of interest. He disguised none of his prejudices against the etiquette and customs of the Court of France; and even in the pres-

¹ The custom was, even supposing dinner to have commenced, if a princess of the blood arrived, and she was asked to sit down at the Queen's table, the comptrollers and gentlemen-in-waiting came immediately to attend, and the Queen's women withdrew. These had succeeded the maids of honour in several parts of their service, and had preserved some of their privileges. One day the Duchesse d'Orléans arrived at Fontainebleau, at the Queen's dinner-hour. The Queen invited her to the table, and herself motioned to her women to leave the room, and let the men take their places. Her Majesty said she was resolved to continue a privilege which kept places of that description most honourable, and render them suitable for ladies of nobility without fortune. Madame de Misery, Baronne de Blache, the Queen's first lady of the chamber, to whom I was made reversioner, was a daughter of M. le Comte de Chemant, and her grandmother was a Montmorency. M. le Prince de Tingry, in the presence of the Queen, used to call her *cousin*. The ancient household of the Kings of France had prerogatives acknowledged in the State. Many of the offices were tenable only by those of noble blood, and were sold at from 40,000 to 300,000 francs. A collection of edicts of the Kings in favour of the prerogatives and right of precedence of the persons holding office in the royal household is still in existence. — MADAME CAMPAN.

ence of the King made them the subject of his sarcasms. The King smiled, but never made any answer; the Queen appeared pained. The Emperor frequently terminated his observations upon the objects in Paris which he had admired by reproaching the King for suffering himself to remain in ignorance of them. He could not conceive how such a wealth of pictures should remain shut up in the dust of immense stores;¹ and told him one day that but for the practice of placing some of them in the apartments of Versailles he would not know even the principal *chef d'œuvres* that he possessed.² He also reproached him for not having visited the Hôtel des Invalides nor the Ecole Militaire; and even went so far as to tell him before us that he ought not only to know what Paris contained, but to travel in France, and reside a few days in each of his large towns.

At last the Queen was really hurt at the Emperor's remarks, and gave him a few lectures upon the freedom with which he allowed himself to lecture others. One day she was busied in signing warrants and orders for payment for her household, and was

¹ Shortly after the Emperor's departure, the Comte d'Angivilliers laid before the King plans for the erection of the Museum, which was then begun. — MADAME CAMPAN.

² The Emperor loudly censured the existing practice of allowing shopkeepers to erect shops near the outward walls of all the palaces, and even to establish something like a fair in the galleries of Versailles and Fontainebleau, and even upon the landings of the staircases. — MADAME CAMPAN.

conversing with M. Augeard, her secretary for such matters, who presented the papers one after another to be signed, and replaced them in his portfolio. While this was going forward, the Emperor walked about the room; all at once he stood still, to reproach the Queen rather severely for signing all those papers without reading them, or, at least, without running her eye over them; and he spoke most judiciously to her upon the danger of signing her name inconsiderately. The Queen answered that very wise principles might be very ill applied; that her secretary, who deserved her implicit confidence, was at that moment laying before her nothing but orders for payment of the quarter's expenses of her household, registered in the Chamber of Accounts; and that she ran no risk of incautiously giving her signature.

The Queen's toilet was likewise a never-failing subject for animadversion with the Emperor. He blamed her for having introduced too many new fashions; and teased her about her use of rouge. One day, while she was laying on more of it than usual, before going to the play, he pointed out a lady who was in the room, and who was, in truth, highly painted. "A little more under the eyes," said the Emperor to the Queen; "lay on the rouge like a fury, as that lady does." The Queen entreated her brother to refrain from his jokes, or at all events to

address them, when they were so outspoken, to her alone.

The Queen had made an appointment to meet her brother at the Italian theatre ; she changed her mind, and went to the French theatre, sending a page to the Italian theatre to request the Emperor to come to her there. He left his box, lighted by the comedian Clairval, and attended by M. de la Ferté, comptroller of the Queen's privy purse, who was much hurt at hearing his Imperial Majesty, after kindly expressing his regret at not being present during the Italian performance, say to Clairval, "Your young Queen is very giddy ; but, luckily, you Frenchmen have no great objection to that."

I was with my father-in-law in one of the Queen's apartments when the Emperor came to wait for her there, and, knowing that M. Campan was librarian, he conversed with him about such books as would of course be found in the Queen's library. After talking of our most celebrated authors, he casually said, "There are doubtless no works on finance or on administration here ?"

These words were followed by his opinion on all that had been written on those topics, and the different systems of our two famous ministers, Sully and Colbert ; on errors which were daily committed in France, in points essential to the prosperity of the Empire ; and on the reform he himself would make

at Vienna. Holding M. Campan by the button, he spent more than an hour talking vehemently, and without the slightest reserve, about the French Government. My father-in-law and myself maintained profound silence, as much from astonishment as from respect; and when we were alone we agreed not to speak of this interview.

The Emperor was fond of describing the Italian Courts that he had visited. The jealous quarrels between the King and Queen of Naples amused him highly; he described to the life the manner and speech of that sovereign, and the simplicity with which he used to go and solicit the first chamberlain to obtain permission to return to the nuptial bed, when the angry Queen had banished him from it. The time which he was made to wait for this reconciliation was calculated between the Queen and her chamberlain, and always proportioned to the gravity of the offence. He also related several very amusing stories relative to the Court of Parma, of which he spoke with no little contempt. If what this Prince said of those Courts, and even of Vienna, had been written down, the whole would have formed an interesting collection. The Emperor told the King that the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Naples being together, the former said a great deal about the changes he had effected in his State. The Grand Duke had issued a mass of new edicts, in order

to carry the precepts of the economists into execution, and trusted that in so doing he was labouring for the welfare of his people. The King of Naples suffered him to go on speaking for a long time, and then casually asked how many Neapolitan families there were in Tuscany. The Duke soon reckoned them up, as they were but few. "Well, brother," replied the King of Naples, "I do not understand the indifference of your people towards your great reforms; for I have four times the number of Tuscan families settled in my States that you have of Neapolitan families in yours."

The Queen being at the Opéra with the Emperor, the latter did not wish to show himself; but she took him by the hand, and gently drew him to the front of the box. This kind of presentation to the public was most warmly received. The performance was "*Iphigenia in Aulis*," and for the second time the chorus, "*Chantons, célébrons notre Reine!*" was called for with universal plaudits.

A fête of a novel description was given at Petit Trianon. The art with which the English garden was not illuminated, but lighted, produced a charming effect. Earthen lamps, concealed by boards painted green, threw light upon the beds of shrubs and flowers, and brought out their varied tints. Several hundred burning fagots in the moat behind the Temple of Love made a blaze of light, which rendered

that spot the most brilliant in the garden. After all, this evening's entertainment had nothing remarkable about it but the good taste of the artists, yet it was much talked of. The situation did not allow the admission of a great part of the Court; those who were uninvited were dissatisfied; and the people, who never forgive any fêtes but those they share in, so exaggerated the cost of this little fête as to make it appear that the fagots burnt in the moat had required the destruction of a whole forest. The Queen being informed of these reports, was determined to know exactly how much wood had been consumed; and she found that fifteen hundred fagots had sufficed to keep up the fire until four o'clock in the morning.

After staying a few months the Emperor left France, promising his sister to come and see her again. All the officers of the Queen's chamber had many opportunities of serving him during his stay, and expected that he would make them presents before his departure. Their oath of office positively forbade them to receive a gift from any foreign prince; they had therefore agreed to refuse the Emperor's presents at first, but to ask the time necessary for obtaining permission to accept them. The Emperor, probably informed of this custom, relieved the good people from their difficulty by setting off without making a single present.

About the latter end of 1777 the Queen, being alone

in her closet, sent for my father-in-law and myself, and, giving us her hand to kiss, told us that, looking upon us both as persons deeply interested in her happiness, she wished to receive our congratulations, — that at length she was the Queen of France, and that she hoped soon to have children; that till now she had concealed her grief, but that she had shed many tears in secret.

Dating from this happy but long-delayed moment, the King's attachment to the Queen assumed every characteristic of love. The good Lassone, first physician to the King and Queen, frequently spoke to me of the uneasiness that the King's indifference, the cause of which he had been so long in overcoming, had given him, and appeared to me at that time to entertain no anxiety except of a very different description.

In the winter of 1778 the King's permission for the return of Voltaire, after an absence of twenty-seven years, was obtained. A few strict persons considered this concession on the part of the Court very injudicious. The Emperor, on leaving France, passed by the Château of Ferney without stopping there. He had advised the Queen not to suffer Voltaire to be presented to her. A lady belonging to the Court learned the Emperor's opinion on that point, and reproached him with his want of enthusiasm towards the greatest genius of the age. He replied

that for the good of the people he should always endeavour to profit by the knowledge of the philosophers; but that his own business of sovereign would always prevent his ranking himself amongst that sect. The clergy also took steps to hinder Voltaire's appearance at Court. Paris, however, carried to the highest pitch the honours and enthusiasm shown to the great poet.

It was very unwise to let Paris pronounce with such transport an opinion so opposite to that of the Court. This was pointed out to the Queen, and she was told that, without conferring on Voltaire the honour of a presentation, she might see him in the State apartments. She was not averse to following this advice, and appeared embarrassed solely about what she should say to him. She was recommended to talk about nothing but the "*Henriade*," "*Méropé*," and "*Zaira*." The Queen replied that she would still consult a few other persons in whom she had great confidence. The next day she announced that it was irrevocably decided Voltaire should not see any member of the royal family, — his writings being too antagonistic to religion and morals. "It is, however, strange," said the Queen, "that while we refuse to admit Voltaire into our presence as the leader of philosophical writers, the *Maréchal de Mouchy* should have presented to me some years ago *Madame Geoffrin*, who owed her celebrity to the title of foster-mother of the philosophers."

On the occasion of the duel of the Comte d'Artois with the Prince de Bourbon the Queen determined privately to see the Baron de Besenval, who was to be one of the witnesses, in order to communicate the King's intentions. I have read with infinite pain the manner in which that simple fact is perverted in the first volume of M. de Besenval's "Memoirs." He is right in saying that M. Campan led him through the upper corridors of the Château, and introduced him into an apartment unknown to him; but the air of romance given to the interview is equally culpable and ridiculous. M. de Besenval says that he found himself, without knowing how he came there, in an apartment unadorned, but very conveniently furnished, of the existence of which he was till then utterly ignorant. He was astonished, he adds, not that the Queen should have so many facilities, but that she should have ventured to procure them. Ten printed sheets of the woman Lamotte's libels contain nothing so injurious to the character of Marie Antoinette as these lines, written by a man whom she honoured by undeserved kindness. He could not have had any opportunity of knowing the existence of the apartments, which consisted of a very small antechamber, a bed-chamber, and a closet. Ever since the Queen had occupied her own apartment, these had been appropriated to her Majesty's lady of honour in cases of illness, and were actually so used when the Queen

was confined. It was so important that it should not be known the Queen had spoken to the Baron before the duel that she had determined to go through her inner room into this little apartment, to which M. Campan was to conduct him. When men write of recent times they should be scrupulously exact, and not indulge in exaggerations or inventions.

The Baron de Besenval appears mightily surprised at the Queen's sudden coolness, and refers it to the fickleness of her disposition. I can explain the reason for the change by repeating what her Majesty said to me at the time ; and I will not alter one of her expressions. Speaking of the strange presumption of men, and the reserve with which women ought always to treat them, the Queen added that age did not deprive them of the hope of pleasing, if they retained any agreeable qualities ; that she had treated the Baron de Besenval as a brave Swiss, agreeable, polished, and witty, whose gray hairs had induced her to look upon him as a man whom she might see without harm ; but that she had been much deceived. Her Majesty, after having enjoined me to the strictest secrecy, told me that, finding herself alone with the Baron, he began to address her with so much gallantry that she was thrown into the utmost astonishment, and that he was mad enough to fall upon his knees, and make her a declaration in form. The Queen added that she said to him : " Rise, monsieur ; the King shall be ignorant

of an offence which would disgrace you for ever ;” that the Baron grew pale and stammered apologies ; that she left her closet without saying another word, and that since that time she hardly ever spoke to him. “ It is delightful to have friends,” said the Queen ; “ but in a situation like mine it is sometimes difficult for the friends of our friends to suit us.”

In the beginning of the year 1778 Mademoiselle d'Eon obtained permission to return to France, on condition that she should appear there in female dress. The Comte de Vergennes entreated my father, M. Genet, chief clerk of Foreign Affairs, who had long known the Chevalier d'Eon, to receive that strange personage at his house, to guide and restrain, if possible, her ardent disposition. The Queen, on learning her arrival at Versailles, sent a footman to desire my father to bring her into her presence ; my father thought it his duty first to inform the Minister of her Majesty's wish. The Comte de Vergennes expressed himself pleased with my father's prudence, and desired that he would accompany him to the Queen. The Minister had a few minutes' audience ; her Majesty came out of her closet with him, and condescended to express to my father the regret she felt at having troubled him to no purpose ; and added, smiling, that a few words from M. de Vergennes had for ever cured her of her curiosity. The dis-

covery in London of the true sex of this pretended woman makes it probable that the few words uttered by the Minister contained a solution of the enigma.

The Chevalier d'Eon had been useful in Russia as a spy of Louis XV. While very young he had found means to introduce himself at the Court of the Empress Elizabeth, and served that sovereign in the capacity of reader. Resuming afterwards his military dress, he served with honour and was wounded. Appointed chief secretary of legation, and afterwards minister plenipotentiary at London, he unpardonably insulted Comte de Guerchy, the ambassador. The official order for the Chevalier's return to France was actually delivered to the King's Council; but Louis XV. delayed the departure of the courier who was to be its bearer, and sent off another courier privately, who gave the Chevalier d'Eon a letter in his own writing, in which he said, "I know that you have served me as effectually in the dress of a woman as in that which you now wear. Resume it instantly; withdraw into the city; I warn you that the King yesterday signed an order for your return to France; you are not safe in your hotel, and you would here find too powerful enemies." I heard the Chevalier d'Eon repeat the contents of this letter, in which Louis XV. thus separated himself from the King of France, several times at my father's. The Chevalier, or rather the *Chevalière*

d'Eon had preserved all the King's letters. Messieurs de Maurepas and de Vergennes wished to get them out of his hands, as they were afraid he would print them. This eccentric being had long solicited permission to return to France; but it was necessary to find a way of sparing the family he had offended the insult they would see in his return; he was therefore made to resume the costume of that sex to which in France everything is pardoned. The desire to see his native land once more determined him to submit to the condition, but he revenged himself by combining the long train of his gown and the three deep ruffles on his sleeves with the attitude and conversation of a grenadier, which made him very disagreeable company.¹

¹ The account given by Madame Campan of the Chevalier d'Eon is now known to be incorrect in many particulars. Enough details for most readers will be found in the Duc de Broglie's "Secret of the King," vol. ii., chaps. vi. and x., and at p. 89, vol. ii. of that work, where the Duke refers to the letter of most dubious authenticity spoken of by Madame Campan. The following details will be sufficient for these memoirs: The Chevalier Charles d'Eon de Beaumont (who was born in 1728) was an ex-captain of dragoons, employed in both the open and secret diplomacy of Louis XV. When at the embassy in London he quarrelled with the ambassador, his superior, the Comte de Guerchy (Marquis de Nangis), and used his possession of papers concerning the secret diplomacy to shield himself. It was when hiding in London, in 1765, on account of this business, that he seems first to have assumed woman's dress, which he retained apparently chiefly from love of notoriety. In 1775 a formal agreement with the French Court, made by the instrumentality of Beaumarchais, of all people in the world, permitted him to return to France, retaining the dress of a woman. He went back to France, but again came to England, and died there, at his residence in Millman Street, near the Foundling Hospital, May 22, 1810. He had been a brave

At last, the event so long desired by the Queen, and by all those who wished her well, took place; her Majesty became *enceinte*. The King was in ecstasies. Never was there a more united or happier couple. The disposition of Louis XVI. entirely altered, and became prepossessing and conciliatory; and the Queen was amply compensated for the uneasiness which the King's indifference during the early part of their union had caused her.

The summer of 1778 was extremely hot. July and August passed, but the air was not cooled by a single storm. The Queen spent whole days in close rooms, and could not sleep until she had breathed the fresh night air, walking with the Princesses and her brothers upon the terrace under her apartments. These promenades at first gave rise to no remark; but it occurred to some of the party to enjoy the music of wind instruments during these fine summer nights. The musicians belonging to the chapel were ordered to perform pieces suited to instruments of that description, upon steps constructed in the middle of the garden. The Queen, seated on one of the terrace benches, enjoyed the effect of this music, surrounded by all the royal family with the excep-

and distinguished officer, but his form and a certain coldness of temperament always remarked in him assisted him in his assumption of another sex. There appears to be no truth in the story of his proceedings at the Russian Court, and his appearing in female attire was a surprise to those who must have known of any earlier affair of the sort.

tion of the King, who joined them but twice, disliking to change his hour of going to bed.

Nothing could be more innocent than these parties; yet Paris, France, nay, all Europe, were soon canvassing them in a manner most disadvantageous to the reputation of Marie Antoinette. It is true that all the inhabitants of Versailles enjoyed these serenades, and that there was a crowd near the spot from eleven at night until two or three in the morning. The windows of the ground floor occupied by Monsieur and Madame¹ were kept open, and the terrace was perfectly well lighted by the numerous wax candles burning in the two apartments. Lamps were likewise placed in the garden, and the lights of the orchestra illuminated the rest of the place.

I do not know whether a few incautious women might not have ventured farther, and wandered to the bottom of the park; it may have been so; but the Queen, Madame, and the Comtesse d'Artois were always arm-in-arm, and never left the terrace. The Princesses were not remarkable when seated on the benches, being dressed in cambric muslin gowns, with large straw hats and muslin veils, a costume universally adopted by women at that time; but when standing up their different figures always distinguished them; and the persons present stood on one side to let them pass. It is true that when they

¹ The wife of Monsieur, the Comte de Provence.

seated themselves upon the benches private individuals would sometimes, to their great amusement, sit down by their side.

A young clerk in the War Department, either not knowing or pretending not to know the Queen, spoke to her of the beauty of the night, and the delightful effect of the music. The Queen, fancying she was not recognised, amused herself by keeping up the incognito, and they talked of several private families of Versailles, consisting of persons belonging to the King's household or her own. After a few minutes the Queen and Princesses rose to walk, and on leaving the bench curtsied to the clerk. The young man knowing, or having subsequently discovered, that he had been conversing with the Queen, boasted of it in his office. He was merely desired to hold his tongue; and so little attention did he excite that the Revolution found him still only a clerk.

Another evening one of Monsieur's body-guard seated himself near the Princesses, and, knowing them, left the place where he was sitting, and placed himself before the Queen, to tell her that he was very fortunate in being able to seize an opportunity of imploring the kindness of his sovereign; that he was "soliciting at Court" — at the word *soliciting* the Queen and Princesses rose hastily and withdrew into Madame's apartment.¹ I was at the Queen's residence

¹ Soulavie has most criminally perverted these two facts. — MADAME CAMPAK.

that day. She talked of this little occurrence all the time of her *coucher*; though she only complained that one of Monsieur's guards should have had the effrontery to speak to her. Her Majesty added that he ought to have respected her incognito; and that that was not the place where he should have ventured to make a request. Madame had recognised him, and talked of making a complaint to his captain; the Queen opposed it, attributing his error to his ignorance and provincial origin.

The most scandalous libels were based on these two insignificant occurrences, which I have related with scrupulous exactness. Nothing could be more false than those calumnies. It must be confessed, however, that such meetings were liable to ill consequences. I ventured to say as much to the Queen, and informed her that one evening, when her Majesty beckoned to me to go and speak to her, I thought I recognised on the bench on which she was sitting two women deeply veiled, and keeping profound silence; that those women were the Comtesse du Barry and her sister-in-law; and that my suspicions were confirmed, when, at a few paces from the seat, and nearer to her Majesty, I met a tall footman belonging to Madame du Barry, whom I had seen in her service all the time she resided at Court.

My advice was disregarded. Misled by the pleasure she found in these promenades, and secure in the con-

sciousness of blameless conduct, the Queen would not see the lamentable results which must necessarily follow. This was very unfortunate; for besides the mortifications they brought upon her, it is highly probable that they prompted the vile plot which gave rise to the Cardinal de Rohan's fatal error.

Having enjoyed these evening promenades about a month, the Queen ordered a private concert within the colonnade which contained the group of Pluto and Proserpine. Sentinels were placed at all the entrances, and ordered to admit within the colonnade only such persons as should produce tickets signed by my father-in-law. A fine concert was performed there by the musicians of the chapel and the female musicians belonging to the Queen's chamber. The Queen went with Mesdames de Polignac, de Châlon, and d'Andlau, and Messieurs de Polignac, de Coigny, de Besenval, and de Vaudreuil; there were also a few equerries present. Her Majesty gave me permission to attend the concert with some of my female relations. There was no music upon the terrace. The crowd of inquisitive people, whom the sentinels kept at a distance from the enclosure of the colonnade, went away highly discontented; the small number of persons admitted no doubt occasioned jealousy, and gave rise to offensive comments which were caught up by the public with avidity. I do not pretend to apologise for the kind of amusements with which the

Queen indulged herself during this and the following summer; the consequences were so lamentable that the error was no doubt very great; but what I have said respecting the character of these promenades may be relied on as true.

When the season for evening walks was at an end, odious couplets were circulated in Paris; the Queen was treated in them in the most insulting manner; her situation ranked among her enemies persons attached to the only prince who for several years had appeared likely to give heirs to the crown. People uttered the most inconsiderate language; and those improper conversations took place in societies wherein the imminent danger of violating to so criminal an extent both truth and the respect due to sovereigns ought to have been better understood. A few days before the Queen's confinement a whole volume of manuscript songs, concerning her and all the ladies about her remarkable for rank or station was, thrown down in the *œil-de-bœuf*.¹ This manuscript was immediately put into the hands of the King, who was highly incensed at it, and said that he had himself been at those promenades; that he had seen nothing connected with them but what was perfectly harmless; that such songs would disturb the harmony of twenty families in the Court and city; that it was a

¹ A large room at Versailles lighted by a bull's-eye window, and used as a waiting-room.

capital crime to have made any against the Queen herself; and that he wished the author of the infamous libels to be discovered and punished. A fortnight afterwards it was known publicly that the verses were by M. Champcenetz de Riquebourg,¹ who was not even reprimanded.

I knew for a certainty that the King spoke to M. de Maurepas, before two of his most confidential servants, respecting the risk which he saw the Queen ran from these night walks upon the terrace of Versailles, which the public ventured to censure thus openly, and that the old minister had the cruelty to advise that she should be suffered to go on; she possessed talent; her friends were very ambitious, and longed to see her take a part in public affairs; and to let her acquire the reputation of levity would do no harm. M. de Vergennes was as hostile to the Queen's influence as M. de Maurepas. It may therefore be fairly presumed, since the Prime Minister durst point out to his King an advantage to be gained by the Queen's discrediting herself, that he and M. de Vergennes employed all means within the reach of powerful ministers in order to ruin her in the opinion of the public.²

¹ The author of a great many songs, some of which are very well written. Lively and satirical by nature, he did not lose either his cheerfulness or his carelessness before the revolutionary tribunal. After hearing his own sentence read, he asked his judges if he *might not be allowed to find a substitute*. — MADAME CAMPAN.

² Madame Campan's account of the conduct of the Comte de Maurepas

The Queen's *accouchement* approached; *Te Deums* were sung and prayers offered up in all the cathedrals. On the 11th of December, 1778, the royal family, the Princes of the blood, and the great officers of State passed the night in the rooms adjoining the Queen's bedchamber. Madame, the King's daughter, came into the world before mid-day on the 19th of December.¹ The etiquette of allowing all persons indiscriminately to enter at the moment of the delivery of a queen was observed with such exaggeration that when the *accoucheur* said aloud, "*La Reine va s'accoucher*," the persons who poured into the chamber were so numerous that the rush nearly destroyed the Queen. During the night the King had taken the precaution to have the enormous tapestry screens which surrounded her Majesty's bed secured with cords; but for this they certainly would have been thrown down upon her. It was impossible to move about the chamber, which was filled with so motley a crowd that one might have fancied himself in some place of public amusement. Two Savoyards got upon the furniture for a better sight of the Queen, who was placed opposite the fireplace.

is confirmed by a writer with whom she is very seldom in accordance. "It is known," says Soulevie, "that in 1774, 1775, and 1776, M. de Maurepas stirred up private quarrels between Louis XVI. and his wife on pretence of the Queen's inconsiderate conduct."—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

¹ Marie Thérèse Charlotte (1778-1851), Madame Royale; married in 1799 Louis, Duc d'Angoulême, eldest son of the Comte d'Artois.

The noise and the sex of the infant, with which the Queen was made acquainted by a signal previously agreed on, as it is said, with the Princesse de Lamballe, or some error of the *accoucheur*, brought on symptoms which threatened fatal consequences; the *accoucheur* exclaimed, "Give her air — warm water — she must be bled in the foot!" The windows were stopped up; the King opened them with a strength which his affection for the Queen gave him at the moment. They were of great height, and pasted over with strips of paper all round. The basin of hot water not being brought quickly enough, the *accoucheur* desired the chief surgeon to use his lancet without waiting for it. He did so; the blood streamed out freely, and the Queen opened her eyes. The Princesse de Lamballe was carried through the crowd in a state of insensibility. The *valets de chambre* and pages dragged out by the collar such inconsiderate persons as would not leave the room. This cruel custom was abolished afterwards. The Princes of the family, the Princes of the blood, the chancellor, and the ministers are surely sufficient to attest the legitimacy of an hereditary prince. The Queen was snatched from the very jaws of death; she was not conscious of having been bled, and on being replaced in bed asked why she had a linen bandage upon her foot.

The delight which succeeded the moment of fear

was equally lively and sincere. We were all embracing each other, and shedding tears of joy. The Comte d'Esterhazy and the Prince de Poix, to whom I was the first to announce that the Queen was restored to life, embraced me in the midst of the cabinet of nobles. We little imagined, in our happiness at her escape from death, for how much more terrible a fate our beloved Princess was reserved.

NOTE. The two following specimens of the Emperor Joseph's correspondence forcibly demonstrate the vigour, shrewdness, and originality of his mind, and complete the portrait left of him by Madame Campan.

Few sovereigns have given their reasons for refusing appointments with the fullness and point of the following letter:

To a Lady.

MADAM. — I do not think that it is amongst the duties of a monarch to grant places to one of his subjects merely because he is a gentleman. That, however, is the inference from the request you have made to me. Your late husband was, you say, a distinguished general, a gentleman of good family, and thence you conclude that my kindness to your family can do no less than give a company of foot to your second son, lately returned from his travels.

Madam, a man may be the son of a general and yet have no talent for command. A man may be of a good family and yet possess no other merit than that which he owes to chance, — the name of gentleman.

I know your son, and I know what makes the soldier; and this twofold knowledge convinces me that your son has not the disposition of a warrior, and that he is too full of his birth to leave the country a hope of his ever rendering it any important service.

What you are to be pitied for, madam, is, that your son is not fit either for an officer, a statesman, or a priest; in a word, that he is nothing more than a gentleman in the most extended acceptation of the word.

You may be thankful to that destiny, which, in refusing talents to your son, has taken care to put him in possession of great wealth, which will sufficiently compensate him for other deficiencies, and enable him at the same time to dispense with any favour from me.

I hope you will be impartial enough to see the reasons which prompt me to refuse your request. It may be disagreeable to you, but I consider it necessary. Farewell, madam. — Your sincere well-wisher,

JOSEPH.

LACHSENBURG, 4th August, 1787.

The application of another anxious and somewhat covetous mother was answered with still more decision and irony:

To a Lady.

MADAM. — You know my disposition; you are not ignorant that the society of the ladies is to me a mere recreation, and that I have never sacrificed my principles to the fair sex. I pay but little attention to recommendations, and I only take them into consideration when the person in whose behalf I may be solicited possesses real merit.

Two of your sons are already loaded with favours. The eldest, who is not yet twenty, is chief of a squadron in my army, and the younger has obtained a canonry at Cologne, from the Elector, my brother. What would you have more? Would you have the first a general and the second a bishop?

In France you may see colonels in leading-strings, and in Spain the royal princes command armies even at eighteen; hence Prince Stahremberg forced them to retreat so often that they were never able all the rest of their lives to comprehend any other manoeuvre.

It is necessary to be sincere at Court, and severe in the field, stoical without obduracy, magnanimous without weakness, and to gain the esteem of our enemies by the justice of our actions; and this, madam, is what I aim at.

JOSEPH.

VIENNA, September, 1787.

(From the inedited Letters of Joseph II., published at Paris, by Persan, 1822.)

CHAPTER X.

Public Rejoicings. — Death of Maria Theresa; the Queen's Affliction. — Anecdotes of Maria Theresa. — Birth of the Dauphin. — Bankruptcy of the Prince de Guéménée. — The Duchesse de Polignac Is Appointed Governess of the Children of France. — Jealousy of the Court. — Mode of Life at Trianon. — Presumption of the Duc de Fronsac. — American War. — Franklin. — M. de La Fayette. — Order for Admitting None but Gentlemen to the Rank of Officer. — Spirit of the Third Estate.

DURING the alarm for the life of the Queen, regret at not possessing an heir to the throne was not even thought of. The King himself was wholly occupied with the care of preserving an adored wife. The young Princess was presented to her mother. "Poor little one," said the Queen, "you were not wished for, but you are not on that account less dear to me. A son would have been rather the property of the State. You shall be mine; you shall have my undivided care, shall share all my happiness, and console me in all my troubles."

The King despatched a courier to Paris, and wrote letters himself to Vienna, by the Queen's bedside;

and part of the rejoicings ordered took place in the capital.¹

A great number of attendants watched near the Queen during the first nights of her confinement. This custom distressed her; she knew how to feel for others, and ordered large armchairs for her women, the backs of which were capable of being let down by springs, and which served perfectly well instead of beds.

M. de Lassone, the chief physician, the chief surgeon, the chief apothecary, the principal officers of the buttery, etc., were likewise nine nights without going to bed. The royal children were watched for a long time, and one of the women on duty remained, nightly, up and dressed, during the first three years from their birth.

The Queen made her entry into Paris for the churching. One hundred maidens were portioned and married at Notre-Dame. There were few popular acclamations, but her Majesty was perfectly well received at the Opéra.²

¹ The Queen's propitious delivery was celebrated throughout France. The birth of Madame inspired more than one poet. The following madrigal, by Imbert, was much admired:

"A Dauphin we asked of our Queen;
A Princess announces him near:
Since one of the Graces is seen,
Young Cupid will quickly appear."

— NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

² The acts of benevolence performed by the officers of the city did not prevent them from amusing the people with the usual fêtes. There were

A few days after the Queen's recovery from her confinement, the Curé of the Magdelaine de la Cité at Paris wrote to M. Campan and requested a private interview with him ; it was to desire he would deliver into the hands of the Queen a little box containing her wedding ring, with this note written by the Curé : "I have received under the seal of confession the ring which I send to your Majesty ; with an avowal that it was stolen from you in 1771, in order to be used in sorceries, to prevent your having any children." On seeing her ring again the Queen said that she had in fact lost it about seven years before, while washing her hands, and that she had resolved to use no endeavour to discover the superstitious woman who had done her the injury.

illuminations, *jeux de jete*, fireworks, fountains of wine, and distributions of bread and sausages. All the theatres of Paris were opened *gratis* — which was a new treat to the public. Every theatre was full before noon, and the performance began at two o'clock. The French comedians performed "*Zaira*," and the little piece called "*Le Florentin*." In spite of all the precautions taken to preserve the King's box for the charcoal vendors, who were accustomed to occupy it on similar occasions, as the *poissardes*, or market-women, did that of the Queen, their places were occupied when they arrived. They were informed of this, and thought it very strange. These two chief classes of the lower orders were seen disputing upon etiquette, with almost as much pertinacity as noblemen or sovereign courts. They demanded to know why the boxes appropriated to them by custom had been suffered to be occupied. It was necessary to call the officer for the week, and the histrionic senate being assembled in consultation, the registers were inspected, and the legitimacy of the claim was acknowledged. An offer was then made to the charcoal vendors to go upon the stage, and they all sat there on the King's side, upon benches prepared for them. The *poissardes* followed, and placed themselves on the opposite side. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The Queen's attachment to the Comtesse Jules increased every day; she went frequently to her house at Paris, and even took up her own abode at the Château de la Muette to be nearer during her confinement.¹ She married Mademoiselle de Polignac, when scarcely thirteen years of age, to M. de Grammont, who, on account of this marriage, was made Duc de Guiche, and captain of the King's Guards, in reversion after the Duc de Villeroi. The Duchesse de Civrac, Madame Victoire's *dame d'honneur*, had been promised the place for the Duc de Lorges, her son. The number of discontented families at Court increased.

The title of favourite was too openly given to the Comtesse Jules by her friends. The lot of the favourite of a queen is not, in France, a happy one; the

¹ "The Duchesse de Polignac," says Montjole, in the "Life of Marie Antoinette," "sank under the fatigues of the life which her devotion to the Queen had imposed upon her, and which was little to her taste. Her health declined alarmingly: the physicians ordered her the Bath waters. As it was the established custom of the Court that the governess of the children of France should never be absent from them, the Duchess tendered her resignation to the Queen, who, having listened to her in silence, her eyes wet with tears, replied: 'You ought not to part from me, nor can you do it; your heart could not suffer it. In the rank I fill it is difficult to meet with a friend; and yet it is so useful — so happy — to confide in an estimable person! You do not judge me as the common herd do; you know that the splendour which surrounds me adds nothing to happiness; you are not ignorant that my soul, full of bitterness and troubles which I must conceal, feels the necessity for a heart that sympathises with them. Ought I not, then, to thank Heaven for having given me a friend like you, faithful, feeling, attached to myself and not to my rank? The benefit is inestimable! In the name of God, do not deprive me of it!'" — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

favourites of kings are treated, out of gallantry, with much greater indulgence.

A short time after the birth of Madame the Queen became again *enceinte* ; she had mentioned it only to the King, to her physician, and to a few persons honoured with her intimate confidence, when, having over-exerted her strength in pulling up one of the glasses of her carriage, she felt that she had hurt herself, and eight days afterwards she miscarried. The King spent the whole morning at her bedside, consoling her, and manifesting the tenderest concern for her. The Queen wept exceedingly; the King took her affectionately in his arms, and mingled his tears with hers. The King enjoined silence among the small number of persons who were informed of this unfortunate occurrence; and it remained generally unknown. These particulars furnish an accurate idea of the manner in which this august couple lived together.

The Empress Maria Theresa did not enjoy the happiness of seeing her daughter give an heir to the crown of France. That illustrious Princess died at the close of 1780, after having proved by her example that, as in the instance of Queen Blanche, the talents of a sovereign might be blended with the virtues of a pious princess. The King was deeply affected at the death of the Empress; and on the arrival of the courier from Vienna said that he could not bring himself to afflict the Queen by informing her of an event

which grieved even him so much. His Majesty thought the Abbé de Vermond, who had possessed the confidence of Maria Theresa during his stay at Vienna, the most proper person to discharge this painful duty. He sent his first *valet de chambre*, M. de Chamilly, to the Abbé on the evening of the day he received the despatches from Vienna, to order him to come the next day to the Queen before her breakfast hour, to acquit himself discreetly of the afflicting commission with which he was charged, and to let his Majesty know the moment of his entering the Queen's chamber. It was the King's intention to be there precisely a quarter of an hour after him, and he was punctual to his time; he was announced; the Abbé came out; and his Majesty said to him, as he drew up at the door to let him pass, "I thank you, Monsieur l'Abbé, for the service you have just done me." This was the only time during nineteen years that the King spoke to him.

Within an hour after learning the event the Queen put on temporary mourning, while waiting until her Court mourning should be ready; she kept herself shut up in her apartments for several days; went out only to mass; saw none but the royal family; and received none but the Princesse de Lamballe and the Duchesse de Polignac. She talked incessantly of the courage, the misfortunes, the successes, and the virtues of her mother. The shroud and dress in

Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette.

Original etching by A. Gery-Richard.





which Maria Theresa was to be buried, made entirely by her own hands, were found ready prepared in one of her closets. She often regretted that the numerous duties of her august mother had prevented her from watching in person over the education of her daughters; and modestly said that she herself would have been more worthy if she had had the good fortune to receive lessons directly from a sovereign so enlightened and so deserving of admiration.¹

The Queen told me one day that her mother was left a widow at an age when her beauty was yet striking; that she was secretly informed of a plot laid by her three principal ministers to make themselves agreeable to her; of a compact made between them, that the losers should not feel any jealousy towards him who should be fortunate enough to gain his sovereign's heart; and that they had sworn that the successful one should be always the friend of the other two. The Empress being assured of this scheme, one day after the breaking up of the council over which she had presided, turned the conversation upon the subject of female sovereigns, and the duties of

¹ Without desiring to lessen the high estimation in which the character of Maria Theresa may be held, it cannot be denied that certain acts of her policy were open to censure. The complaisance or the weakness of the other cabinets of Europe did not excuse her. "A bishop of St. Brieuc, in a funeral oration upon Maria Theresa," says Chamfort, "got over the partition of Poland very easily: 'France,' said he, 'having taken no notice of the partition in question, I will do as France did, and be silent about it likewise.'" — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

their sex and rank; and then applying her general reflections to herself in particular, told them that she hoped to guard herself all her life against weaknesses of the heart; but that if ever an irresistible feeling should make her alter her resolution, it should be only in favour of a man proof against ambition, not engaged in State affairs, but attached only to a private life and its calm enjoyments, — in a word, if her heart should betray her so far as to lead her to love a man invested with any important office, from the moment he should discover her sentiments he would forfeit his place and his influence with the public. This was sufficient; the three ministers, more ambitious than amorous, gave up their projects for ever.

On the 22d of October, 1781, the Queen gave birth to a Dauphin.¹ So deep a silence prevailed in the room that the Queen thought her child was a daughter; but after the Keeper of the Seals had declared the sex of the infant, the King went up to the Queen's bed, and said to her, "Madame, you have fulfilled my wishes and those of France: you are the mother of a Dauphin." The King's joy was boundless; tears streamed from his eyes; he gave his hand to every one present; and his happiness carried away his habitual reserve. Cheerful and affable, he was incessantly taking occasion to introduce the words, "my son," or "the Dauphin." As soon as the Queen

¹ The first Dauphin, Louis, born 1781, died 1789.

was in bed, she wished to see the long-looked-for infant. The Princesse de Guéménée brought him to her. The Queen said there was no need for commending him to the Princess, but in order to enable her to attend to him more freely, she would herself share the care of the education of her daughter. When the Dauphin was settled in his apartment, he received the customary homages and visits. The Duc d'Angoulême,¹ meeting his father at the entrance of the Dauphin's apartment, said to him, "Oh, papa! how little my cousin is!" "The day will come when you will think him great enough, my dear," answered the Prince, almost involuntarily.

The birth of the Dauphin appeared to give joy to all classes. Men stopped one another in the streets, spoke without being acquainted, and those who were acquainted embraced each other. In the birth of a legitimate heir to the sovereign every man beholds a pledge of prosperity and tranquillity.²

The rejoicings were splendid and ingenious. The artificers and tradesmen of Paris spent considerable sums in order to go to Versailles in a body, with their

¹ Eldest son of the Comte d'Artois, and till the birth of the Dauphin with near prospects of the succession.

² M. Mérard de Saint Just made a quatrain on the birth of the Dauphin to the following effect:

"This infant Prince our hopes are centred in,
Will doubtless make us happy, rich, and free;
And since with *somebody* he must begin,
My fervent prayer is — that it may be *me*!"

— NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

various insignia. Almost every troop had music with it. When they arrived at the court of the palace, they there arranged themselves so as to present a most interesting living picture. Chimney-sweepers, quite as well dressed as those that appear upon the stage, carried an ornamented chimney, at the top of which was perched one of the smallest of their fraternity. The chairmen carried a sedan highly gilt, in which were to be seen a handsome nurse and a little Dauphin. The butchers made their appearance with their fat ox. Cooks, masons, blacksmiths, all trades were on the alert. The smiths hammered away upon an anvil, the shoemakers finished off a little pair of boots for the Dauphin, and the tailors a little suit of the uniform of his regiment. The King remained a long time upon a balcony to enjoy the sight. The whole Court was delighted with it. So general was the enthusiasm that (the police not having carefully examined the procession) the gravediggers had the imprudence to send their deputation also, with the emblematic devices of their ill-omened occupation. They were met by the Princesse Sophie, the King's aunt, who was thrilled with horror at the sight, and entreated the King to have the audacious fellows driven out of the procession, which was then drawing up on the terrace.

The *dames de la halle* came to congratulate the Queen, and were received with the suitable ceremonies.

Fifty of them appeared dressed in black silk gowns, the established full dress of their order, and almost all wore diamonds. The Princesse de Chimay went to the door of the Queen's bedroom to receive three of these ladies, who were led up to the Queen's bed. One of them addressed her Majesty in a speech written by M. de la Harpe. It was set down on the inside of a fan, to which the speaker repeatedly referred, but without any embarrassment. She was handsome, and had a remarkably fine voice. The Queen was affected by the address, and answered it with great affability,—wishing a distinction to be made between these women and the *poissardes*, who always left a disagreeable impression on her mind. The King ordered a substantial repast for all these women. One of his Majesty's *maîtres d'hôtel*, wearing his hat, sat as president and did the honours of the table. The public were admitted, and numbers of people had the curiosity to go.

The Gardes-du-Corps obtained the King's permission to give the Queen a dress ball in the great hall of the Opéra at Versailles. Her Majesty opened the ball in a minuet with a private selected by the corps, to whom the King granted the baton of an exempt. The fête was most splendid. All then was joy, happiness, and peace.¹

¹ "The well-known antagonism between Marie Antoinette and Madame de Genlis dated," says Madame Campan, "from the birth of

The Dauphin was a year old when the Prince de Guéménée's bankruptcy compelled the Princess, his wife, who was governess to the children of France, to resign her situation.

The Queen was at La Muette for the inoculation of her daughter. She sent for me, and condescended to say she wished to converse with me about a scheme which delighted her, but in the execution of which she foresaw some inconveniences. Her plan was to appoint the Duchesse de Polignac to the office lately held by the Princesse de Guéménée. She saw with extreme pleasure the facilities which this appointment would give her for superintending the education of her children, without running any risk of hurting the pride of the governess; and that it would bring together the objects of her warmest affections,—her children and her friend. "The friends of the Duchesse de Polignac," continued the Queen, "will be gratified by the splendour and importance conferred by the employment. As to the Duchess, I know her;

the Dauphin, when the Duchesse de Chartres made the authoress's excuses for not appearing to offer her congratulations; indisposition had prevented her. The Queen replied that the Duchesse de Chartres would have caused an apology to be made in such a case; that the celebrity of Madame de Genlis might have occasioned her absence to be noticed, but that she was not of a rank to send an apology for it. This proceeding on the part of the Princess, influenced by the talents of the governess of her children, proves that at the time she still desired the regard and friendship of the Queen; and from this moment unfavourable reflections on the habits and inclinations of the sovereign, and sharp criticisms on the works and the conduct of the female author, were continually interchanged between Marie Antoinette and Madame de Genlis."

the place by no means suits her simple and quiet habits, nor the sort of indolence of her disposition. She will give me the greatest possible proof of her devotion if she yields to my wish." The Queen also spoke of the Princesse de Chimay and the Duchesse de Duras, whom the public pointed out as fit for the post; but she thought the Princesse de Chimay's piety too rigid; and as to the Duchesse de Duras, her wit and learning quite frightened her. What the Queen dreaded as the consequence of her selection of the Duchesse de Polignac was principally the jealousy of the courtiers; but she showed so lively a desire to see her scheme executed that I had no doubt she would soon set at naught all the obstacles she discovered. I was not mistaken; a few days afterwards the Duchess was appointed governess.

The Queen's object in sending for me was no doubt to furnish me with the means of explaining the feelings which induced her to prefer a governess disposed by friendship to suffer her to enjoy all the privileges of a mother. Her Majesty knew that I saw a great deal of company.

The Queen frequently dined with the Duchess after having been present at the King's private dinner. Sixty-one thousand francs were therefore added to the salary of the governess as a compensation for this increase of expense.

The Queen was tired of the excursions to Marly,

and had no great difficulty in setting the King against them. He did not like the expense of them, for everybody was entertained there *gratis*. Louis XIV. had established a kind of parade upon these excursions, differing from that of Versailles, but still more annoying. Card and supper parties occurred every day, and required much dress. On Sundays and holidays the fountains played, the people were admitted into the gardens, and there was as great a crowd as at the fêtes of St. Cloud.

Every age has its peculiar colouring; Marly showed that of Louis XIV. even more than Versailles. Everything in the former place appeared to have been produced by the magic power of a fairy's wand. Not the slightest trace of all this splendour remains; the revolutionary spoilers even tore up the pipes which served to supply the fountains. Perhaps a brief description of this palace and the usages established there by Louis XIV. may be acceptable.

The very extensive gardens of Marly ascended almost imperceptibly to the Pavilion of the Sun, which was occupied only by the King and his family. The pavilions of the twelve zodiacal signs bounded the two sides of the lawn. They were connected by bowers impervious to the rays of the sun. The pavilions nearest to that of the sun were reserved for the Princes of the blood and the ministers; the rest were occupied by persons holding superior offices at

Court, or invited to stay at Marly. Each pavilion was named after fresco paintings, which covered its walls, and which had been executed by the most celebrated artists of the age of Louis XIV. On a line with the upper pavilion there was on the left a chapel; on the right a pavilion called *La Perspective*, which concealed a long suite of offices, containing a hundred lodging-rooms intended for the persons belonging to the service of the Court, kitchens, and spacious dining-rooms, in which more than thirty tables were splendidly laid out.

During half of Louis XV.'s reign the ladies still wore the *habit de cour de Marly*, so named by Louis XIV., and which differed little from that devised for Versailles. The French gown, gathered in the back, and with great hoops, replaced this dress, and continued to be worn till the end of the reign of Louis XVI. The diamonds, feathers, rouge, and embroidered stuffs spangled with gold, effaced all trace of a rural residence; but the people loved to see the splendour of their sovereign and a brilliant Court glittering in the shades of the woods.

After dinner, and before the hour for cards, the Queen, the Princesses, and their ladies, paraded among the clumps of trees, in little carriages, beneath canopies richly embroidered with gold, drawn by men in the King's livery. The trees planted by Louis XIV. were of prodigious height, which, however, was sur-

passed in several of the groups by fountains of the clearest water ; while, among others, cascades over white marble, the waters of which, met by the sunbeams, looked like draperies of silver gauze, formed a contrast to the solemn darkness of the groves.

In the evening nothing more was necessary for any well-dressed man to procure admission to the Queen's card parties than to be named and presented, by some officer of the Court, to the gentleman usher of the card-room. This room, which was very large, and of octagonal shape, rose to the top of the Italian roof, and terminated in a cupola furnished with balconies, in which ladies who had not been presented easily obtained leave to place themselves, and enjoy the sight of the brilliant assemblage.

Though not of the number of persons belonging to the Court, gentlemen admitted into this *salon* might request one of the ladies seated with the Queen at *lansquenet* or *faro* to bet upon her cards with such gold or notes as they presented to her. Rich people and the gamblers of Paris did not miss one of the evenings at the Marly *salon*, and there were always considerable sums won and lost. Louis XVI. hated high play, and very often showed displeasure when the loss of large sums was mentioned. The fashion of wearing a black coat without being in mourning had not then been introduced, and the King gave a few of his *coups de boutoir* to certain chevaliers

de St. Louis, dressed in this manner, who came to venture two or three louis, in the hope that fortune would favour the handsome duchesses who deigned to place them on their cards.¹

Singular contrasts are often seen amidst the grandeur of courts. In order to manage such high play at the Queen's faro table, it was necessary to have a banker provided with large sums of money ; and this necessity placed at the table, to which none but the highest titled persons were admitted in general, not only M. de Chalabre, who was its banker, but also a retired captain of foot, who officiated as his second. A word, trivial, but perfectly appropriate to express the manner in which the Court was attended there, was often heard. Gentlemen presented at Court, who had not been invited to stay at Marly, came there notwithstanding, as they did to Versailles, and returned again to Paris ; under such circumstances, it was said such a one had been to Marly only *en polisson* ;² and it appeared odd to hear a captivating marquis, in an-

¹ Bachaumont in his "Memoirs" (tome xii., p. 189), which are often satirical, and always somewhat questionable, speaks of the singular precautions taken at play at Court. "The bankers at the Queen's table," says he, "in order to prevent the mistakes [I soften the harshness of his expression] which daily happen, have obtained permission from her Majesty that before beginning to play the table shall be bordered by a ribbon entirely round it, and that no other money than that upon the cards beyond the ribbon shall be considered as staked." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

² A contemptuous expression, meaning literally "as a scamp" or "rascal."

swer to the inquiry whether he was of the royal party at Marly, say, "No, I am only here *en polisson*:" meaning simply "I am here on the footing of all those whose nobility is of a later date than 1400." The Marly excursions were exceedingly expensive to the King. Besides the superior tables, those of the almoners, equerries, *maîtres d'hôtel*, etc., were all supplied with such a degree of magnificence as to allow of inviting strangers to them; and almost all the visitors from Paris were boarded at the expense of the Court.

The personal frugality of the unfortunate Prince who sank beneath the weight of the national debts thus favoured the Queen's predilection for her Petit Trianon; and for five or six years preceding the Revolution the Court very seldom visited Marly.

The King, always attentive to the comfort of his family, gave Mesdames, his aunts, the use of the Château de Bellevue, and afterwards purchased the Princesse de Guéménée's house, at the entrance to Paris, for Elisabeth.² The Comtesse de Provence bought a small house at Montreuil; Monsieur already had Brunoy; the Comtesse d'Artois built Bagatelle; Versailles became, in the estimation of all the royal family, the least agreeable of residences. They only

² Madame Elisabeth had this house for several years; but the King arranged that she should not sleep there until she was twenty-five years of age. The Revolution broke out before that time. — MADAME CAMPAN.

fancied themselves at home in the plainest houses, surrounded by English gardens, where they better enjoyed the beauties of nature. The taste for cascades and statues was entirely past.

The Queen occasionally remained a whole month at Petit Trianon, and had established there all the ways of life in a château. She entered the sitting-room without driving the ladies from their pianoforte or embroidery. The gentlemen continued their billiards or backgammon without suffering her presence to interrupt them. There was but little room in the small Château of Trianon. Madame Elisabeth accompanied the Queen there, but the ladies of honour and ladies of the palace had no establishment at Trianon. When invited by the Queen, they came from Versailles to dinner. The King and Princes came regularly to sup. A white gown, a gauze kerchief, and a straw hat were the uniform dress of the Princesses.¹ Examining all the manufactories of the ham-

¹ The extreme simplicity of the Queen's toilet began to be strongly censured, at first among the courtiers, and afterwards throughout the kingdom; and through one of those inconsistencies more common in France than elsewhere, while the Queen was blamed, she was blindly imitated. There was not a woman but would have the same undress, the same cap, and the same feathers as she had been seen to wear. They crowded to Mademoiselle Bertin, her milliner; there was an absolute revolution in the dress of our ladies, which gave importance to that woman. Long trains, and all those fashions which confer a certain nobility on dress, were discarded; and at last a duchess could not be distinguished from an actress. The men caught the mania; the upper classes had long before given up to their lackeys feathers, tufts of ribbon, and laced hats. They now got rid of red heels and embroidery; and walked about

let, seeing the cows milked, and fishing in the lake delighted the Queen; and every year she showed increased aversion to the pompous excursions to Marly.

The idea of acting comedies, as was then done in almost all country houses, followed on the Queen's wish to live at Trianon without ceremony.¹ It was agreed that no young man except the Comte d'Artois should be admitted into the company of performers, and that the audience should consist only of the King, Monsieur, and the Princesses, who did not play; but in order to stimulate the actors a little, the first boxes were to be occupied by the readers, the Queen's

our streets in plain cloth, short thick shoes, and with knotty cudgels in their hands. Many humiliating scrapes were the consequence of this metamorphosis. Bearing no mark to distinguish them from the common herd, some of the lowest classes got into quarrels with them, in which the nobles had not always the best of it. — MONTJOIE, "History of Marie Antoinette."

¹ The Queen got through the characters she assumed indifferently enough; she could hardly be ignorant of this, as her performances evidently excited little pleasure. Indeed, one day while she was thus exhibiting, somebody ventured to say, by no means inaudibly, "Well, this is royally ill played!" The lesson was thrown away upon her, for never did she sacrifice to the opinion of another that which she thought permissible. When she was told that her extreme plainness in dress, the nature of her amusements, and her dislike to that splendour which ought always to attend a Queen, had an appearance of levity, which was misinterpreted by a portion of the public, she replied with Madame de Maintenon: "I am upon the stage, and of course I shall be either hissed or applauded." Louis XIV. had a similar taste; he danced upon the stage; but he had shown by brilliant actions that he knew how to enforce respect; and besides, he unhesitatingly gave up the amusement from the moment he heard those beautiful lines in which Racine pointed out how very unworthy of him such pastimes were. — MONTJOIE, "History of Marie Antoinette."

ladies, their sisters and daughters, making altogether about forty persons.¹

The Queen laughed heartily at the voice of M. d'Adhémar, formerly a very fine one, but latterly become rather tremulous. His shepherd's dress in Colin, in the "*Devin du Village*," contrasted very ridiculously with his time of life, and the Queen said it would be difficult for malevolence itself to find anything to criticise in the choice of such a lover. The King was highly amused with these plays, and was present at every performance. Caillot, a celebrated actor, who had long quitted the stage, and Dazincourt, both of acknowledged good character, were selected to give lessons, the first in comic opera, of which the easier sorts were preferred, and the second in comedy. The office of hearer of rehearsals, prompter, and stage manager was given to my father-in-law. The Duc de Fronsac, first gentleman of the chamber, was much hurt at this. He thought himself called upon to make serious remonstrances upon the subject, and wrote to the Queen, who made him the following answer: "You cannot be first gentleman when we are

¹ "*La Gageure Imprévue*" was one of the pieces performed at Trianon. The Queen played the part of Gotte, the Comtesse Diane that of Madame de Clairville, Madame Elisabeth the young woman, and the Comte d'Artois one of the men's characters. Colette, in the "*Devin du Village*," was really very well played by the Queen. They performed also, in the course of the following seasons, "*Le Roi et le Fermier*;" "*Rose et Colas*;" "*le Sorcier*;" "*l'Anglais à Bourdeaux*;" "*On ne s'avise jamais de tout*;" "*le Barbier de Seville*," etc. — MADAME CAMPAN.

the actors. Besides, I have already intimated to you my determination respecting Trianon. I hold no court there, I live like a private person, and M. Campan shall be always employed to execute orders relative to the private fêtes I choose to give there." This not putting a stop to the Duke's remonstrances, the King was obliged to interfere. The Duke continued obstinate, and insisted that he was entitled to manage the private amusements as much as those which were public. It became absolutely necessary to end the argument in a positive manner.

The diminutive Duc de Fronsac never failed, when he came to pay his respects to the Queen at her toilet, to turn the conversation upon Trianon, in order to make some ironical remarks on my father-in-law, of whom, from the time of his appointment, he always spoke as "my colleague Campan." The Queen would shrug her shoulders, and say, when he was gone, "It is quite shocking to find so little a man in the son of the Maréchal de Richelieu."

So long as no strangers were admitted to the performances they were but little censured; but the praise obtained by the performers made them look for a larger circle of admirers. The company, for a private company, was good enough, and the acting was applauded to the skies; nevertheless, as the audience withdrew, adverse criticisms were occasionally heard. The Queen permitted the officers of the Body Guards

and the equerries of the King and Princes to be present at the plays. Private boxes were provided for some of the people belonging to the Court; a few more ladies were invited; and claims arose on all sides for the favour of admission. The Queen refused to admit the officers of the body guards of the Princes, the officers of the King's *Cent Suisses*, and many other persons, who were highly mortified at the refusal.

While delight at having given an heir to the throne of the Bourbons, and a succession of fêtes and amusements, filled up the happy days of Marie Antoinette, the public was engrossed by the Anglo-American war. Two kings, or rather their ministers, planted and propagated the love of liberty in the new world; the King of England, by shutting his ears and his heart against the continued and respectful representations of subjects at a distance from their native land, who had become numerous, rich, and powerful, through the resources of the soil they had fertilised; and the King of France, by giving support to this people in rebellion against their ancient sovereign. Many young soldiers, belonging to the first families of the country, followed La Fayette's example, and forsook luxury, amusement, and love, to go and tender their aid to the revolted Americans. Beaumarchais, secretly seconded by Messieurs de Maurepas and de Vergennes, obtained permission to send out supplies of arms and clothing. Franklin appeared at Court in the dress of

an American agriculturist. His unpowdered hair, his round hat, his brown cloth coat formed a contrast to the laced and embroidered coats and the powder and perfume of the courtiers of Versailles. This novelty turned the light heads of the Frenchwomen. Elegant entertainments were given to Doctor Franklin, who, to the reputation of a man of science, added the patriotic virtues which invested him with the character of an apostle of liberty. I was present at one of these entertainments, when the most beautiful woman out of three hundred was selected to place a crown of laurels upon the white head of the American philosopher, and two kisses upon his cheeks. Even in the palace of Versailles Franklin's medallion was sold under the King's eyes, in the exhibition of Sèvres porcelain. The legend of this medallion was :

"Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

The King never declared his opinion upon an enthusiasm which his correct judgment no doubt led him to blame. The Queen spoke out more plainly about the part France was taking respecting the independence of the American colonies, and constantly opposed it. Far was she from foreseeing that a revolution at such a distance could excite one in which a misguided populace would drag her from her palace to a death equally unjust and cruel. She

only saw something ungenerous in the method which France adopted of checking the power of England.

However, as Queen of France, she enjoyed the sight of a whole people rendering homage to the prudence, courage, and good qualities of a young Frenchman; and she shared the enthusiasm inspired by the conduct and military success of the Marquis de La Fayette. The Queen granted him several audiences on his first return from America, and, until the 10th of August, on which day my house was plundered, I preserved some lines from Gaston and Bayard, in which the friends of M. de La Fayette saw the exact outline of his character, written by her own hand :

“ Why talk of youth,
When all the ripe experience of the old
Dwells with him ? In his schemes profound and cool,
He acts with wise precaution, and reserves
For time of action his impetuous fire.
To guard the camp, to scale the leaguered wall,
Or dare the hottest of the fight, are toils
That suit th’ impetuous bearing of his youth ;
Yet like the gray-hair’d veteran he can shun
The field of peril. Still before my eyes
I place his bright example, for I love
His lofty courage, and his prudent thought.
Gifted like him, a warrior has no age.”¹

¹ During the American war a general officer in the service of the United States advanced with a score of men under the English batteries to reconnoitre their position. His aide-de-camp, struck by a ball, fell at his side. The officers and orderly dragoons fled precipitately. The general, though under the fire of the cannon, approached the wounded man

These lines had been applauded and encored at the French theatre; everybody's head was turned. There was no class of persons that did not heartily approve of the support given openly by the French Government to the cause of American independence. The constitution planned for the new nation was digested at Paris, and while liberty, equality, and the rights of man were commented upon by the Condorcets, Baillys, Mirabeaus, etc., the minister Ségur published the King's edict, which, by repealing that of 1st November, 1750, declared all officers not noble by four generations incapable of filling the rank of captain, and denied all military rank to the *roturiers*, excepting sons of the chevaliers de St. Louis.² The injustice and absurdity of this law was no doubt a secondary cause of the Revolution. To understand the despair and rage with

to see whether any help could be afforded him. Finding the wound had been mortal, he slowly rejoined the group which had got out of the reach of the cannon. This instance of courage and humanity took place at the battle of Monmouth. General Clinton, who commanded the English troops, knew that the Marquis de La Fayette generally rode a white horse; it was upon a white horse that the general officer who retired so slowly was mounted; Clinton desired the gunners not to fire. This noble forbearance probably saved M. de La Fayette's life, for he it was. At that time he was but twenty-two years of age. — "Historical Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XVI."

² "M. de Ségur," says Chamfort, "having published an ordinance which prohibited the admission of any other than gentlemen into the artillery corps, and, on the other hand, none but well-educated persons being proper for admission, a curious scene took place: the Abbé Bossat, examiner of the pupils, gave certificates only to plebeians, while Cherin gave them only to gentlemen. Out of one hundred pupils, there were not above four or five who were qualified in both respects."

which this law inspired the *Tiers Etat* one should have belonged to that honourable class. The provinces were full of *roturier* families, who for ages had lived as people of property upon their own domains, and paid the taxes. If these persons had several sons, they would place one in the King's service, one in the Church, another in the Order of Malta as a *chevalier servant d'armes*, and one in the magistracy; while the eldest preserved the paternal manor, and if he were situated in a country celebrated for wine, he would, besides selling his own produce, add a kind of commission trade in the wines of the canton. I have seen an individual of this justly respected class, who had been long employed in diplomatic business, and even honoured with the title of minister plenipotentiary, the son-in-law and nephew of colonels and town mayors, and, on his mother's side, nephew of a lieutenant-general with a cordon rouge, unable to introduce his sons as sous-lieutenants into a regiment of foot.

Another decision of the Court, which could not be announced by an edict, was that all ecclesiastical benefices, from the humblest priory up to the richest abbey, should in future be appanages of the nobility. Being the son of a village surgeon, the Abbé de Vermond, who had great influence in the disposition of benefices, was particularly struck with the justice of this decree.

During the absence of the Abbé in an excursion he made for his health, I prevailed on the Queen to

write a postscript to the petition of a curé, one of my friends, who was soliciting a priory near his curacy, with the intention of retiring to it. I obtained it for him. On the Abbé's return he told me very harshly that I should act in a manner quite contrary to the King's wishes if I again obtained such a favour; that the wealth of the Church was for the future to be invariably devoted to the support of the poorer nobility; that it was the interest of the State that it should be so; and a plebeian priest, happy in a good curacy, had only to remain curate.

Can we be astonished at the part shortly afterwards taken by the deputies of the Third Estate, when called to the States General?

CHAPTER XL.

Visit of the Grand Duke of Russia and His Duchess to France. — Entertainment and Supper at Trianon. — Cardinal de Rohan. — Cold Reception Given to Comte d'Haga (Gustavus III., King of Sweden). — Peace with England. — The English Flock into France. — Conduct to Be Observed at Court. — Mission of the Chevalier de Bressac to the Queen. — Court of Naples. — Queen Caroline. — The Minister Acton. — Debates between the Courts of Naples and Madrid. — Insolent Reply of the Spanish Ambassador to Queen Caroline. — Interference of France. — MM. de Ségur and de Castries Appointed Ministers through the Queen's Influence. — Treachery of M. de Maurepas towards M. Necker. — Appointment of M. de Calonne. — Observations of Marie Antoinette.

ABOUT the close of the last century several of the Northern sovereigns took a fancy for travelling. Christian III., King of Denmark, visited the Court of France in 1763, during the reign of Louis XV. We have seen the King of Sweden and Joseph II. at Versailles. The Grand Duke of Russia (afterwards Paul I.), son of Catherine II., and the Princess of Wurtemberg, his wife, likewise resolved to visit France. They travelled under the titles of the Comte and Comtesse du Nord. They were pre-

sented on the 20th of May, 1782. The Queen received them with grace and dignity. On the day of their arrival at Versailles they dined in private with the King and Queen.

The plain, unassuming appearance of Paul I. pleased Louis XVI. He spoke to him with more confidence and cheerfulness than he had spoken to Joseph II. The Comtesse du Nord was not at first so successful with the Queen. This lady was of a fine height, very fat for her age, with all the German stiffness, well informed, and perhaps displaying her acquirements with rather too much confidence. When the Comte and Comtesse du Nord were presented the Queen was exceedingly nervous. She withdrew into her closet before she went into the room where she was to dine with the illustrious travellers, and asked for a glass of water, confessing "she had just experienced how much more difficult it was to play the part of a queen in the presence of other sovereigns, or of princes born to become so, than before courtiers." She soon recovered from her confusion, and reappeared with ease and confidence. The dinner was tolerably cheerful, and the conversation very animated.

Brilliant entertainments were given at Court in honour of the King of Sweden and the Comte du Nord. They were received in private by the King and Queen, but they were treated with much more

ceremony than the Emperor, and their Majesties always appeared to me to be very cautious before these personages. However, the King one day asked the Russian Grand Duke if it were true that he could not rely on the fidelity of any one of those who accompanied him. The Prince answered him without hesitation, and before a considerable number of persons, that he should be very sorry to have with him even a poodle that was much attached to him, because his mother would take care to have it thrown into the Seine, with a stone round its neck, before he should leave Paris. This reply, which I myself heard, horrified me, whether it depicted the disposition of Catherine, or only expressed the Prince's prejudice against her.

The Queen gave the Grand Duke a supper at Trianon, and had the gardens illuminated as they had been for the Emperor. The Cardinal de Rohan very indiscreetly ventured to introduce himself there without the Queen's knowledge. Having been treated with the utmost coolness ever since his return from Vienna, he had not dared to ask her himself for permission to see the illumination; but he persuaded the porter of Trianon to admit him as soon as the Queen should have set off for Versailles, and his Eminence engaged to remain in the porter's lodge until all the carriages should have left the château. He did not keep his word, and while the porter was

busy in the discharge of his duty, the Cardinal, who wore his red stockings and had merely thrown on a greatcoat, went down into the garden, and, with an air of mystery, drew up in two different places to see the royal family and suite pass by.

Her Majesty was highly offended at this piece of boldness, and next day ordered the porter to be discharged. There was a general feeling of disgust at the Cardinal's conduct, and of commiseration towards the porter for the loss of his place. Affected at the misfortune of the father of a family, I obtained his forgiveness; and since that time I have often regretted the feeling which induced me to interfere. The notoriety of the discharge of the porter of Trianon, and the odium that circumstance would have fixed upon the Cardinal, would have made the Queen's dislike to him still more publicly known, and would probably have prevented the scandalous and notorious intrigue of the necklace.

The Queen, who was much prejudiced against the King of Sweden, received him very coldly.¹ All that was said of the private character of that sovereign, his connection with the Comte de Vergennes, from the time of the Revolution of Sweden, in 1772, the

¹ Gustavus III., King of Sweden, travelled in France under the title of Comte d'Haga. Upon his accession to the throne, he managed the revolution which prostrated the authority of the Senate with equal skill, coolness, and courage. He was assassinated in 1792, at a masked ball, by Ankarström. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

character of his favourite Armfeldt, and the prejudices of the monarch himself against the Swedes who were well received at the Court of Versailles, formed the grounds of this dislike. He came one day uninvited and unexpected, and requested to dine with the Queen. The Queen received him in the little closet, and desired me to send for her clerk of the kitchen, that she might be informed whether there was a proper dinner to set before Comte d'Haga, and add to it if necessary. The King of Sweden assured her that there would be enough for him; and I could not help smiling when I thought of the length of the *menu* of the dinner of the King and Queen, not half of which would have made its appearance had they dined in private. The Queen looked significantly at me, and I withdrew. In the evening she asked me why I had seemed so astonished when she ordered me to add to her dinner, saying that I ought instantly to have seen that she was giving the King of Sweden a lesson for his presumption. I owed to her that the scene had appeared to me so much in the bourgeois style, that I involuntarily thought of the cutlets on the gridiron, and the omelette, which in families in humble circumstances serve to piece out short commons. She was highly diverted with my answer, and repeated it to the King, who also laughed heartily at it.

The peace with England satisfied all classes of

society interested in the national honour. The departure of the English commissary from Dunkirk, who had been fixed at that place ever since the shameful peace of 1763 as inspector of our navy, occasioned an ecstasy of joy.¹ The Government communicated to the Englishman the order for his departure before the treaty was made public. But for that precaution the populace would have probably committed some excess or other, in order to make the agent of English power feel the effects of the resentment which had constantly increased during his stay at that port. Those engaged in trade were the only persons dissatisfied with the treaty of 1783. That article which provided for the free admission of English goods annihilated at one blow the trade of Rouen and the other manufacturing towns throughout the kingdom. The English swarmed into Paris. A considerable number of them were presented at Court. The Queen paid them marked attention; doubtless she wished them to distinguish between the esteem she felt for their noble nation and the political views of the Government in the support it had afforded to the Americans. Discontent was,

¹ By the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) it was stipulated that the fortifications and port of Dunkirk should be destroyed. By the Treaty of Paris (1763) a commissary was to reside at Dunkirk to see that no attempt was made to break this treaty. This stipulation was revoked by the Peace of Versailles, in 1763. — See DYER's "Modern Europe," 1st edition, vol. i., pp. 205-438 and 539.

however, manifested at Court in consequence of the favour bestowed by the Queen on the English noblemen; these attentions were called infatuations. This was illiberal; and the Queen justly complained of such absurd jealousy.

The journey to Fontainebleau and the winter at Paris and at Court were extremely brilliant. The spring brought back those amusements which the Queen began to prefer to the splendour of fêtes. The most perfect harmony subsisted between the King and Queen; I never saw but one cloud between them. It was soon dispelled, and the cause of it is perfectly unknown to me.

My father-in-law, whose penetration and experience I respected greatly, recommended me, when he saw me placed in the service of a young queen, to shun all kinds of confidence. "It procures," said he, "but a very fleeting, and at the same time dangerous sort of favour; serve with zeal to the best of your judgment, but never do more than obey. Instead of setting your wits to work to discover why an order or a commission which may appear of consequence is given to you, use them to prevent the possibility of your knowing anything of the matter." I had occasion to act on this wise advice. One morning at Trianon I went into the Queen's chamber; there were letters lying upon the bed, and she was weeping bitterly. Her tears and sobs were occasionally

interrupted by exclamations of "Ah! that I were dead! — wretches! monsters! What have I done to them?" I offered her orange-flower water and ether. "Leave me," said she, "if you love me; it would be better to kill me at once." At this moment she threw her arm over my shoulder and began weeping afresh. I saw that some weighty trouble oppressed her heart, and that she wanted a confidant. I suggested sending for the Duchesse de Polignac; this she strongly opposed. I renewed my arguments, and her opposition grew weaker. I disengaged myself from her arms, and ran to the antechamber, where I knew that an outrider always waited, ready to mount and start at a moment's warning for Versailles. I ordered him to go full speed, and tell the Duchesse de Polignac that the Queen was very uneasy, and desired to see her instantly. The Duchess always had a carriage ready. In less than ten minutes she was at the Queen's door. I was the only person there, having been forbidden to send for the other women. Madame de Polignac came in; the Queen held out her arms to her, the Duchess rushed towards her. I heard her sobs renewed and withdrew.

A quarter of an hour afterwards the Queen, who had become calmer, rang to be dressed. I sent her woman in; she put on her gown and retired to her boudoir with the Duchess. Very soon afterwards the Comte d'Artois arrived from Compiègne, where

he had been with the King. He eagerly inquired where the Queen was; remained half an hour with her and the Duchess; and on coming out told me the Queen asked for me. I found her seated on the couch by the side of her friend; her features had resumed their usual cheerful and gracious appearance. She held out her hand to me, and said to the Duchess, "I know I have made her so uncomfortable this morning that I must set her poor heart at ease." She then added, "You must have seen, on some fine summer's day, a black cloud suddenly appear and threaten to pour down upon the country and lay it waste. The lightest wind drives it away, and the blue sky and serene weather are restored. This is just the image of what has happened to me this morning." She afterwards told me that the King would return from Compiègne after hunting there, and sup with her; that I must send for her purveyor, to select with him from his bills of fare all such dishes as the King liked best; that she would have no others served up in the evening at her table; and that this was a mark of attention that she wished the King to notice. The Duchesse de Polignac also took me by the hand, and told me how happy she was that she had been with the Queen at a moment when she stood in need of a friend. I never knew what could have created in the Queen so lively and so transient an alarm; but

I guessed from the particular care she took respecting the King that attempts had been made to irritate him against her; that the malice of her enemies had been promptly discovered and counteracted by the King's penetration and attachment; and that the Comte d'Artois had hastened to bring her intelligence of it.

It was, I think, in the summer of 1787, during one of the Trianon excursions, that the Queen of Naples¹ sent the Chevalier de Bressac to her Majesty on a secret mission relative to a projected marriage between the Hereditary Prince, her son, and Madame, the King's daughter; in the absence of the lady of honour he addressed himself to me. Although he said a great deal to me about the close confidence with which the Queen of Naples honoured him, and about his letter of credit, I thought he had the air of an adventurer.² He had, indeed, private letters for the Queen, and his mission was not feigned; he talked to me very rashly even before his admission, and entreated me to do all that lay in my power to dispose the Queen's mind in favour of his sovereign's wishes; I declined, assuring him that it did not become me to meddle with State affairs. He endeavoured, but in vain, to prove to me that the union

¹ Caroline, sister of Marie Antoinette.

² He afterwards spent several years shut up in the *Château de l'Œuf*.
—MADAME CAMPAN.

contemplated by the Queen of Naples ought not to be looked upon in that light.

I procured M. de Bressac the audience he desired, but without suffering myself even to seem acquainted with the object of his mission. The Queen told me what it was; she thought him a person ill-chosen for the occasion; and yet she thought that the Queen, her sister, had done wisely in not sending a man worthy to be avowed,—it being impossible that what she solicited should take place. I had an opportunity on this occasion, as indeed on many others, of judging to what extent the Queen valued and loved France and the dignity of our Court. She then told me that Madame,¹ in marrying her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, would not lose her rank as daughter of the Queen; and that her situation would be far preferable to that of queen of any other country; and that there was nothing in Europe to be compared to the Court of France; and that it would be necessary, in order to avoid exposing a French Princess to feelings of deep regret, in case she should be married to a foreign prince, to take her from the palace of Versailles at seven years of age, and send her immediately to the Court in which she was to dwell; and that at twelve would be too late; for recollections and comparisons

¹ The Princess Marie Thérèse Charlotte, daughter of Louis XVI., who married her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, son of the Comte d'Artois, in 1790.

would ruin the happiness of all the rest of her life. The Queen looked upon the destiny of her sisters as far beneath her own; and frequently mentioned the mortifications inflicted by the Court of Spain upon her sister, the Queen of Naples, and the necessity she was under of imploring the mediation of the King of France.

She showed me several letters that she had received from the Queen of Naples relative to her differences with the Court of Madrid respecting the Minister Acton. She thought him useful to her people, inasmuch as he was a man of considerable information and great activity. In these letters she minutely acquainted her Majesty with the nature of the affronts she had received, and represented Mr. Acton to her as a man whom malevolence itself could not suppose capable of interesting her otherwise than by his services. She had had to suffer the impertinences of a Spaniard named Las Casas, who had been sent to her by the King, her father-in-law, to persuade her to dismiss Mr. Acton from the business of the State, and from her intimacy. She complained bitterly to the Queen, her sister, of the insulting proceedings of this *chargé d'affaires*, whom she told, in order to convince him of the nature of the feelings which attached her to Mr. Acton, that she would have portraits and busts of him executed by the most eminent artists of Italy, and that she would then send them

to the King of Spain, to prove that nothing but the desire to retain a man of superior capacity had induced her to bestow on him the favour he enjoyed. This Las Casas dared to answer her that it would be useless trouble; that the ugliness of a man did not always render him displeasing; and that the King of Spain had too much experience not to know that there was no accounting for the caprices of a woman.

This audacious reply filled the Queen of Naples with indignation, and her emotion caused her to miscarry on the same day. In consequence of the mediation of Louis XVI. the Queen of Naples obtained complete satisfaction, and Mr. Acton continued Prime Minister.

Among the characteristics which denoted the goodness of the Queen, her respect for personal liberty should have a place. I have seen her put up with the most troublesome importunities from people whose minds were deranged rather than have them arrested. Her patient kindness was put to a very disagreeable trial by an ex-councillor of the Bordeaux Parliament, named Castelnau; this man declared himself the lover of the Queen, and was generally known by that appellation. For ten successive years did he follow the Court in all its excursions. Pale and wan, as people who are out of their senses usually are, his sinister appearance occasioned the most uncomfort-

able sensations. During the two hours that the Queen's public card parties lasted, he would remain opposite her Majesty. He placed himself in the same manner before her at chapel, and never failed to be at the King's dinner or the dinner in public. At the theatre he invariably seated himself as near the Queen's box as possible. He always set off for Fontainebleau or St. Cloud the day before the Court, and when her Majesty arrived at her various residences, the first person she met on getting out of her carriage was this melancholy madman, who never spoke to any one. When the Queen stayed at Petit Trianon the passion of this unhappy man became still more annoying. He would hastily swallow a morsel at some eating-house, and spend all the rest of the day, even when it rained, in going round and round the garden, always walking at the edge of the moat. The Queen frequently met him when she was either alone or with her children; and yet she would not suffer any violence to be used to relieve her from this intolerable annoyance. Having one day given M. de Sèze permission to enter Trianon, she sent to desire he would come to me, and directed me to inform that celebrated advocate of M. de Castelnau's derangement, and then to send for him that M. de Sèze might have some conversation with him. He talked to him nearly an hour, and made considerable impression upon his mind; and at last M. de Castelnau re-

quested me to inform the Queen positively that, since his presence was disagreeable to her, he would retire to his province. The Queen was very much rejoiced, and desired me to express her full satisfaction to M. de Sèze. Half an hour after M. de Sèze was gone the unhappy madman was announced. He came to tell me that he withdrew his promise, that he had not sufficient command of himself to give up seeing the Queen as often as possible. This new determination was a disagreeable message to take to her Majesty; but how was I affected at hearing her say, "Well, let him annoy me! but do not let him be deprived of the blessing of freedom."¹

The direct influence of the Queen on affairs during the earlier years of the reign was shown only in her exertions to obtain from the King a revision of the decrees in two celebrated causes. It was contrary to her principles to interfere in matters of justice, and never did she avail herself of her influence to bias the tribunals. The Duchesse de Praslin, through a criminal caprice, carried her enmity to her husband so far as to disinherit her children in favour of the family of M. de Guéménée. The Duchesse de Choiseul, who

¹ On the arrest of the King and Queen at Varennes, this unfortunate Castelnau attempted to starve himself to death. The people in whose house he lived, becoming uneasy at his absence, had the door of his room forced open, when he was found stretched senseless on the floor. I do not know what became of him after the 10th of August.—MADAME CAMFAN.

was warmly interested in this affair, one day entreated the Queen, in my presence, at least to condescend to ask the first president when the cause would be called on; the Queen replied that she could not even do that, for it would manifest an interest which it was her duty not to show.

If the King had not inspired the Queen with a lively feeling of love, it is quite certain that she yielded him respect and affection for the goodness of his disposition and the equity of which he gave so many proofs throughout his reign. One evening she returned very late; she came out of the King's closet, and said to M. de Misery and myself, drying her eyes, which were filled with tears, "You see me weeping, but do not be uneasy at it: these are the sweetest tears that a wife can shed; they are caused by the impression which the justice and goodness of the King have made upon me; he has just complied with my request for a revision of the proceedings against Messieurs de Bellegarde and de Monthieu, victims of the Duc d'Aiguillon's hatred to the Duc de Choiseul. He has been equally just to the Duc de Guines in his affair with Tort. It is a happy thing for a queen to be able to admire and esteem him who has admitted her to a participation of his throne; and as to you, I congratulate you upon your having to live under the sceptre of so virtuous a sovereign."

The Queen laid before the King all the memorials

of the Duc de Guines, who, during his embassy to England, was involved in difficulties by a secretary, who speculated in the public funds in London on his own account, but in such a manner as to throw a suspicion of it on the ambassador. Messieurs de Vergennes and Turgot, bearing but little good-will to the Duc de Guines, who was the friend of the Duc de Choiseul, were not disposed to render the ambassador any service. The Queen succeeded in fixing the King's particular attention on this affair, and the innocence of the Duc de Guines triumphed through the equity of Louis XVI.

An incessant underhand war was carried on between the friends and partisans of M. de Choiseul, who were called the Austrians, and those who sided with Messieurs d'Aiguillon, de Maurepas, and de Vergennes, who, for the same reason, kept up the intrigues carried on at Court and in Paris against the Queen. Marie Antoinette, on her part, supported those who had suffered in this political quarrel, and it was this feeling which led her to ask for a revision of the proceedings against Messieurs de Bellegarde and de Monthieu. The first, a colonel and inspector of artillery, and the second, proprietor of a foundry at St. Etienne, were, under the Ministry of the Duc d'Aiguillon, condemned to imprisonment for twenty years and a day for having withdrawn from the arsenals of France, by order of the Duc de Choiseul, a vast number of muskets, as

being of no value except as old iron, while in point of fact the greater part of those muskets were immediately embarked and sold to the Americans. It appears that the Duc de Choiseul imparted to the Queen, as grounds of defence for the accused, the political views which led him to authorise that reduction and sale in the manner in which it had been executed. It rendered the case of Messieurs de Bellegarde and de Monthieu more unfavourable that the artillery officer who made the reduction in the capacity of inspector was, through a clandestine marriage, brother-in-law of the owner of the foundry, the purchaser of the rejected arms. The innocence of the two prisoners was, nevertheless, made apparent; and they came to Versailles with their wives and children to throw themselves at the feet of their benefactress. This affecting scene took place in the grand gallery, at the entrance to the Queen's apartment. She wished to restrain the women from kneeling, saying that they had only had justice done them; and that she ought to be congratulated upon the most substantial happiness attendant upon her station, that of laying just appeals before the King.

On every occasion, when the Queen had to speak in public, she used the most appropriate and elegant language, notwithstanding the difficulty a foreigner might be expected to experience. She answered all addresses herself, a custom which she learned at the

Court of Maria Theresa. The Princesses of the House of Bourbon had long ceased to take the trouble of speaking in such cases. Madame Adélaïde blamed the Queen for not doing as they did, assuring her that it was quite sufficient to mutter a few words that might sound like an answer, while the addressers, occupied with what they had themselves been saying, would always take it for granted that a proper answer had been returned. The Queen saw that idleness alone dictated such a proceeding, and that as the practice even of muttering a few words showed the necessity of answering in some way, it must be more proper to reply simply but clearly, and in the best style possible. Sometimes indeed, when apprised of the subject of the address, she would write down her answer in the morning, not to learn it by heart, but in order to settle the ideas or sentiments she wished to introduce.

The influence of the Comtesse de Polignac increased daily; and her friends availed themselves of it to effect changes in the Ministry. The dismissal of M. de Montbarrey, a man without talents or character, was generally approved of. It was rightly attributed to the Queen. He had been placed in administration by M. de Maurepas, and maintained by his aged wife; both, of course, became more inveterate than ever against the Queen and the Polignac circle.

The appointment of M. de Ségur to the place of

Minister of War, and of M. de Castries to that of Minister of Marine, were wholly the work of that circle. The Queen dreaded making ministers; her favourite often wept when the men of her circle compelled her to interfere. Men blame women for meddling in business, and yet in courts it is continually the men themselves who make use of the influence of the women in matters with which the latter ought to have nothing to do.

When M. de Ségur was presented to the Queen on his new appointment, she said to me, "You have just seen a minister of my making. I am very glad, so far as regards the King's service, that he is appointed, for I think the selection a very good one; but I almost regret the part I have taken in it. I take a responsibility upon myself. I was fortunate in being free from any; and in order to relieve myself from this as much as possible I have just promised M. de Ségur, and that upon my word of honour, not to back any petition, nor to hinder any of his operations by solicitations on behalf of my *protégés*."

During the first administration of M. Necker, whose ambition had not then drawn him into schemes repugnant to his better judgment, and whose views appeared to the Queen to be very judicious, she indulged in hopes of the restoration of the finances. Knowing that M. de Maurepas wished to drive M. Necker to resign, she urged him to have patience until

the death of an old man whom the King kept about him from a fondness for his first choice, and out of respect for his advanced age. She even went so far as to tell him that M. de Maurepas was always ill, and that his end could not be very distant. M. Necker would not wait for that event. The Queen's prediction was fulfilled. M. de Maurepas ended his days immediately after a journey to Fontainebleau in 1781.¹

M. Necker had retired. He had been exasperated by a piece of treachery in the old minister, for which he could not forgive him. I knew something of this intrigue at the time; it has since been fully explained to me by Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau. M. Necker saw that his credit at Court was declining, and fearing lest that circumstance should injure his financial operations, he requested the King to grant him some favour which might show the public that he had not lost the confidence of his sovereign. He concluded his letter by pointing out five requests — such an office, *or* such a mark of distinction, *or* such a badge of honour, and so on, and handed it to M. de Maurepas. The *ors* were changed into *ands*; and the King was displeased at M. Necker's ambition, and

¹ Louis XVI. deeply regretted Maurepas. During his last illness he went himself to inform him of the birth of the Dauphin, *to announce it to his friend and rejoice with him*; these were his very expressions. The day after his funeral he said, with an air of great affliction, "Ah! I shall no longer hear my friend overhead every morning." — "Biographie Universelle."

the assurance with which he displayed it. Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau assured me that the Maréchal de Castries saw the minute of M. Necker's letter, and that he likewise saw the altered copy.

The interest which the Queen took in M. Necker died away during his retirement, and at last changed into strong prejudice against him. He wrote too much about the measures he would have pursued, and the benefits that would have resulted to the State from them. The ministers who succeeded him thought their operations embarrassed by the care that M. Necker and his partisans incessantly took to occupy the public with his plans; his friends were too ardent. The Queen discerned a party spirit in these combinations, and sided wholly with his enemies.

After those inefficient comptrollers-general, Messieurs Joly de Fleury and d'Ormesson, it became necessary to resort to a man of more acknowledged talent, and the Queen's friends, at that time combining with the Comte d'Artois and with M. de Vergennes, got M. de Calonne appointed. The Queen was highly displeased, and her close intimacy with the Duchesse de Polignac began to suffer for this.

Her Majesty, continuing to converse with me upon the difficulties she had met with in private life, told me that ambitious men without merit sometimes found means to gain their ends by dint of importunity, and

that she had to blame herself for having procured M. d'Adhémar's appointment to the London embassy, merely because he teased her into it at the Duchess's house. She added, however, that it was at a time of perfect peace with the English; that the Ministry knew the inefficiency of M. d'Adhémar as well as she did, and that he could do neither harm nor good.

Often in conversations of unreserved frankness the Queen owned that she had purchased rather dearly a piece of experience which would make her carefully watch over the conduct of her daughters-in-law, and that she would be particularly scrupulous about the qualifications of the ladies who might attend them; that no consideration of rank or favour should bias her in so important a choice. She attributed several of her youthful mistakes to a lady of great levity, whom she found in her palace on her arrival in France. She also determined to forbid the Princesses coming under her control the practice of singing with professors, and said, candidly, and with as much severity as her slanderers could have done, "I ought to have heard Garat sing, and never to have sung duets with him."

The indiscreet zeal of Monsieur Augeard contributed to the public belief that the Queen disposed of all the offices of finance. He had, without any authority for doing so, required the committee of *fermiers-général* to inform him of all vacancies, assuring them that

they would be meeting the wishes of the Queen. The members complied, but not without murmuring. When the Queen became aware of what her secretary had done, she highly disapproved of it, caused her resentment to be made known to the *fermiers-général*, and abstained from asking for appointments, — making only one request of the kind, as a marriage portion for one of her attendants, a young woman of good family.

CHAPTER XII.

The Queen Is Dissatisfied with the Appointment of M. de Calonne. — Acts of Benevolence. — Purchase of St. Cloud. — Regulations of Internal Police. — State of France. — Beaumarchais. — “*Mariage de Figaro*.” — Character of M. de Vaudrenil.

THE Queen did not sufficiently conceal the dissatisfaction she felt at having been unable to prevent the appointment of M. de Calonne; she even one day went so far as to say at the Duchess's, in the midst of the partisans and protectors of that minister, that the finances of France passed alternately from the hands of an honest man without talent into those of a skilful knave. M. de Calonne was thus far from acting in concert with the Queen all the time that he continued in office; and, while dull verses were circulated about Paris describing the Queen and her favourite dipping at pleasure into the coffers of the comptroller-general, the Queen was avoiding all communication with him.

During the long and severe winter of 1783-84 the King gave three millions of livres for the relief of the indigent. M. de Calonne, who felt the necessity of making advances to the Queen, caught at this

opportunity of showing her respect and devotion. He offered to place in her hands one million of the three, to be distributed in her name and under her direction. His proposal was rejected; the Queen answered that the charity ought to be wholly distributed in the King's name, and that she would this year debar herself of even the slightest enjoyments, in order to contribute all her savings to the relief of the unfortunate.

The moment M. de Calonne left the closet the Queen sent for me: "Congratulate me, my dear," said she; "I have just escaped a snare, or at least a matter which eventually might have caused me much regret." She related the conversation which had taken place word for word to me, adding, "That man will complete the ruin of the national finances. It is said that I placed him in his situation. The people are made to believe that I am extravagant; yet I have refused to suffer a sum of money from the royal treasury, although destined for the most laudable purpose, even to pass through my hands."

The Queen, making monthly retrenchments from the expenditure of her privy purse, and not having spent the gifts customary at the period of her confinement, was in possession of from five to six hundred thousand francs, her own savings. She made use of from two to three hundred thousand francs of this, which her first women sent to M. Lenoir, to the curés

of Paris and Versailles, and to the Sœurs Hospitalières, and so distributed them among families in need.

Desirous to implant in the breast of her daughter not only a desire to succour the unfortunate, but those qualities necessary for the due discharge of that duty, the Queen incessantly talked to her, though she was yet very young, about the sufferings of the poor during a season so inclement. The Princess already had a sum of from eight to ten thousand francs for charitable purposes, and the Queen made her distribute part of it herself.

Wishing to give her children yet another lesson of beneficence, she desired me on New Year's eve to get from Paris, as in other years, all the fashionable playthings, and have them spread out in her closet. Then taking her children by the hand, she showed them all the dolls and mechanical toys which were ranged there, and told them that she had intended to give them some handsome New Year's gifts, but that the cold made the poor so wretched that all her money was spent in blankets and clothes to protect them from the rigour of the season, and in supplying them with bread; so that this year they would only have the pleasure of looking at the new playthings. When she returned with her children into her sitting-room, she said there was still an unavoidable expense to be incurred; that assuredly many mothers would at that season think as she did, — that the toyman must lose

by it; and therefore she gave him fifty louis to repay him for the cost of his journey, and console him for having sold nothing.

The purchase of St. Cloud, a matter very simple in itself, had, on account of the prevailing spirit, unfavourable consequences to the Queen.

The palace of Versailles, pulled to pieces in the interior by a variety of new arrangements, and mutilated in point of uniformity by the removal of the ambassadors' staircase, and of the peristyle of columns placed at the end of the marble court, was equally in want of substantial and ornamental repair. The King therefore desired M. Micque to lay before him several plans for the repairs of the palace. He consulted me on certain arrangements analogous to some of those adopted in the Queen's establishment, and in my presence asked M. Micque how much money would be wanted for the execution of the whole work, and how many years he would be in completing it. I forget how many millions were mentioned: M. Micque replied that six years would be sufficient time if the Treasury made the necessary periodical advances without any delay. "And how many years shall you require," said the King, "if the advances are not punctually made?" "Ten, Sire," replied the architect. "We must then reckon upon ten years," said his Majesty, "and put off this great undertaking until the year 1790; it will occupy the rest of the century."

The King afterwards talked of the depreciation of property which took place at Versailles whilst the Regent removed the Court of Louis XV. to the Tuileries, and said that he must consider how to prevent that inconvenience; it was the desire to do this that promoted the purchase of St. Cloud. The Queen first thought of it one day when she was riding out with the Duchesse de Polignac and the Comtesse Diane; she mentioned it to the King, who was much pleased with the thought,—the purchase confirming him in the intention, which he had entertained for ten years, of quitting Versailles.

The King determined that the ministers, public officers, pages, and a considerable part of his stabling should remain at Versailles. Messieurs de Breteuil and de Calonne were instructed to treat with the Duc d'Orléans for the purchase of St. Cloud; at first they hoped to be able to conclude the business by a mere exchange. The value of the Château de Choisy, de la Muette, and a forest was equivalent to the sum demanded by the House of Orléans; and in the exchange which the Queen expected she only saw a saving to be made instead of an increase of expense. By this arrangement the government of Choisy, in the hands of the Duc de Coigny, and that of La Muette, in the hands of the Maréchal de Soubise, would be suppressed. At the same time the two *concierges*, and all the servants employed in these two royal houses,

would be reduced; but while the treaty was going forward Messieurs de Breteuil and de Calonne gave up the point of exchange, and some millions in cash were substituted for Choisy and La Muette.

The Queen advised the King to give her St. Cloud, as a means of avoiding the establishment of a governor; her plan being to have merely a *concierge* there, by which means the governor's expenses would be saved. The King agreed, and St. Cloud was purchased for the Queen. She provided the same liveries for the porters at the gates and servants at the château as for those at Trianon. The *concierge* at the latter place had put up some regulations for the household, headed, "By order of the Queen." The same thing was done at St. Cloud. The Queen's livery at the door of a palace where it was expected none but that of the King would be seen, and the words "By order of the Queen" at the head of the printed papers pasted near the iron gates, caused a great sensation, and produced a very unfortunate effect, not only among the common people, but also among persons of a superior class. They saw in it an attack upon the customs of monarchy, and customs are nearly equal to laws. The Queen heard of this, but she thought that her dignity would be compromised if she made any change in the form of these regulations, though they might have been altogether superseded without inconvenience. "My name is not

out of place," said she, "in gardens belonging to myself; I may give orders there without infringing on the rights of the State." This was her only answer to the representations which a few faithful servants ventured to make on the subject. The discontent of the Parisians on this occasion probably induced M. d'Esprémenil, upon the first troubles about the Parliament, to say that it was *impolitic* and *immoral* to see palaces belonging to a Queen of France.¹

The Queen was very much dissatisfied with the manner in which M. de Calonne had managed this matter. The Abbé de Vermond, the most active and persevering of that minister's enemies, saw with delight that the expedients of those from whom alone new resources might be expected were gradually becoming exhausted, because the period when the Archbishop of Toulouse would be placed over the finances was thereby hastened.

The royal navy had resumed an imposing attitude during the war for the independence of America; a

¹ The Queen never forgot this affront of M. d'Esprémenil's; she said that as it was offered at a time when social order had not yet been disturbed, she had felt the severest mortification at it. Shortly before the downfall of the throne M. Esprémenil, having openly espoused the King's side, was insulted in the gardens of the Tuilleries by the Jacobins, and so ill-treated that he was carried home very ill. Somebody recommended the Queen, on account of the royalist principles he then professed, to send and inquire for him. She replied that she was truly grieved at what had happened to M. d'Esprémenil, but that mere policy should never induce her to show any particular solicitude about the man who had been the first to make so insulting an attack upon her character. — MADAME CAMPAN.

glorious peace with England had compensated for the former attacks of our enemies upon the fame of France; and the throne was surrounded by numerous heirs. The sole ground of uneasiness was in the finances, but that uneasiness related only to the manner in which they were administered. In a word, France felt confident in its own strength and resources, when two events, which seem scarcely worthy of a place in history, but which have, nevertheless, an important one in that of the French Revolution, introduced a spirit of ridicule and contempt, not only against the highest ranks, but even against the most august personages. I allude to a comedy and a great swindling transaction.

Beaumarchais had long possessed a reputation in certain circles in Paris for his wit and musical talents, and at the theatres for dramas more or less indifferent, when his "Barbier de Séville" procured him a higher position among dramatic writers. His "Memoirs" against M. Goëzman had amused Paris by the ridicule they threw upon a Parliament which was disliked; and his admission to an intimacy with M. de Maurepas procured him a degree of influence over important affairs. He then became ambitious of influencing public opinion by a kind of drama, in which established manners and customs should be held up to popular derision and the ridicule of the new philosophers. After several years of prosperity

Beaumarchais.
Original Etching by Gilbert.



the minds of the French had become more generally critical; and when Beaumarchais had finished his monstrous but diverting "Mariage de Figaro," all people of any consequence were eager for the gratification of hearing it read, the censors having decided that it should not be performed. These readings of "Figaro" grew so numerous that people were daily heard to say, "I have been (or I am going to be) at the reading of Beaumarchais's play." The desire to see it performed became universal; an expression that he had the art to use compelled, as it were, the approbation of the nobility, or of persons in power, who aimed at ranking among the magnanimous; he made his "Figaro" say that "none but little minds dreaded little books." The Baron de Breteuil, and all the men of Madame de Polignac's circle, entered the lists as the warmest protectors of the comedy. Solicitations to the King became so pressing that his Majesty determined to judge for himself of a work which so much engrossed public attention, and desired me to ask M. Le Noir, lieutenant of police, for the manuscript of the "Mariage de Figaro." One morning I received a note from the Queen ordering me to be with her at three o'clock, and not to come without having dined, for she should detain me some time. When I got to the Queen's inner closet I found her alone with the King; a chair and a small table were ready placed opposite to them, and upon the

table lay an enormous manuscript in several books. The King said to me, "There is Beaumarchais's comedy; you must read it to us. You will find several parts troublesome on account of the erasures and references. I have already run it over, but I wish the Queen to be acquainted with the work. You will not mention this reading to any one."

I began. The King frequently interrupted me by praise or censure, which was always just. He frequently exclaimed, "That's in bad taste; this man continually brings the Italian *concetti* on the stage." At that soliloquy of Figaro in which he attacks various points of government, and especially at the tirade against State prisons, the King rose up and said, indignantly:

"That's detestable; that shall never be played; the Bastille must be destroyed before the license to act this play can be any other than an act of the most dangerous inconsistency. This man scoffs at everything that should be respected in a government."

"It will not be played, then?" said the Queen.

"No, certainly," replied Louis XVI.; "you may rely upon that."

Still it was constantly reported that "Figaro" was about to be performed; there were even wagers laid upon the subject; I never should have laid any myself, fancying that I was better informed as to the probability than anybody else; if I had, however, I

should have been completely deceived. The protectors of Beaumarchais, feeling certain that they would succeed in their scheme of making his work public in spite of the King's prohibition, distributed the parts in the "Mariage de Figaro" among the actors of the Théâtre Français. Beaumarchais had made them enter into the spirit of his characters, and they determined to enjoy at least one performance of this so-called *chef d'œuvre*. The first gentlemen of the chamber agreed that M. de la Ferté should lend the theatre of the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs, at Paris, which was used for rehearsals of the opera; tickets were distributed to a vast number of leaders of society, and the day for the performance was fixed. The King heard of all this only on the very morning, and signed a *lettre de cachet*,¹ which prohibited the performance. When the messenger who brought the order arrived, he found a part of the theatre already filled with spectators, and the streets leading to the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs filled with carriages; the piece was not performed. This prohibition of the King's was looked upon as an attack on public liberty.

The disappointment produced such discontent that the words *oppression* and *tyranny* were uttered with no less passion and bitterness at that time than during

¹ A *lettre de cachet* was any written order proceeding from the King. The term was not confined merely to orders for arrest. — MADAME CAMPAK.

the days which immediately preceded the downfall of the throne. Beaumarchais was so far put off his guard by rage as to exclaim, "Well, gentlemen, he won't suffer it to be played here; but I swear it shall be played, — perhaps in the very choir of Notre-Dame!" There was something prophetic in these words.¹ It was generally insinuated shortly afterwards that Beaumarchais had determined to suppress all those parts of his work which could be obnoxious to the Government; and on pretence of judging of the sacrifices made by the author, M. de Vaudreuil obtained permission to have this far-famed "*Mariage de Figaro*" performed at his country house. M. Campan was asked there; he had frequently heard the work read, and did not now find the alterations that had been announced; this he observed to several persons belonging to the Court, who maintained that the author had made all the sacrifices required. M. Campan was so astonished at these persistent assertions of an obvious falsehood that he replied by a quotation from Beaumarchais himself, and assuming the tone of Basilio in the "*Barbier de Séville*," he said, "Faith, gentlemen, I don't know who is deceived here; everybody is in the secret." They then came to the point, and begged him to tell the Queen positively that all which had been

¹ The Keeper of the Seals had constantly opposed the performance of this play. The King said in his presence one day, "You will see that Beaumarchais will have more weight than the Keeper of Seals." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

pronounced reprehensible in M. de Beaumarchais's play had been cut out. My father-in-law contented himself with replying that his situation at Court would not allow of his giving an opinion unless the Queen should first speak of the piece to him. The Queen said nothing to him about the matter. Shortly afterwards permission to perform this play was at length obtained. The Queen thought the people of Paris would be finely tricked when they saw merely an ill-conceived piece, devoid of interest, as it must appear when deprived of its satire.¹ Under the persuasion that there was not a passage left capable of

¹ "The King," says Grimm, "made sure that the public would judge unfavourably of the work. He said to the Marquis de Montesquion, who was going to see the first representation, 'Well, what do you augur of its success?' 'Sire, I hope the piece will fail.' 'And so do I,' replied the King."

"There is something still more ridiculous than my piece," said Beaumarchais himself; "that is, its success." Mademoiselle Arnould foresaw it the first day, and exclaimed, "It is a production that will fail fifty nights successively." There was as crowded an audience on the seventy-second night as on the first. The following is extracted from Grimm's "Correspondence."

"Answer of M. de Beaumarchais to —, who requested the use of his private box for some ladies desirous of seeing 'Figaro' without being themselves seen."

"I have no respect for women who indulge themselves in seeing any play which they think indecorous, provided they can do so in secret. I lend myself to no such acts. I have given my piece to the public, to amuse, and not to instruct, not to give any compounding prudes the pleasure of going to admire it in a private box, and balancing their account with conscience by censuring it in company. To indulge in the pleasure of vice and assume the credit of virtue is the hypocrisy of the age. My piece is not of a doubtful nature; it must be patronised in good earnest, or avoided altogether; therefore, with all respect to you, I shall keep my box." This letter was circulated all over Paris for a week.

malicious or dangerous application, Monsieur attended the first performance in a public box. The mad enthusiasm of the public in favour of the piece and Monsieur's just displeasure are well known. The author was sent to prison soon afterwards, though his work was extolled to the skies, and though the Court durst not suspend its performance.

The Queen testified her displeasure against all who had assisted the author of the "*Mariage de Figaro*" to deceive the King into giving his consent that it should be represented. Her reproaches were more particularly directed against M. de Vaudreuil for having had it performed at his house. The violent and domineering disposition of her favourite's friend at last became disagreeable to her.

One evening, on the Queen's return from the Duchess's, she desired her *valet de chambre* to bring her billiard cue into her closet, and ordered me to open the box that contained it. I took out the cue, broken in two. It was of ivory, and formed of one single elephant's tooth; the butt was of gold and very tastefully wrought. "There," said she, "that is the way M. de Vaudreuil has treated a thing I valued highly. I had laid it upon the couch while I was talking to the Duchess in the *salon*; he had the assurance to make use of it, and in a fit of passion about a blocked ball, he struck the cue so violently against the table that he broke it in two. The noise brought me back into

the billiard-room; I did not say a word to him, but my looks showed him how angry I was. He is the more provoked at the accident, as he aspires to the post of Governor to the Dauphin. I never thought of him for the place. It is quite enough to have consulted my heart only in the choice of a governess; and I will not suffer that of a Governor to the Dauphin to be at all affected by the influence of my friends. I should be responsible for it to the nation. The poor man does not know that my determination is taken; for I have never expressed it to the Duchess. Therefore, judge of the sort of an evening he must have passed!"

CHAPTER XIII.

The Diamond Necklace. — Account of Böhmer the Jeweller. — His Interview with Madame Campan. — The Cardinal de Rohan Interrogated in the King's Cabinet. — Particulars Relative to Madame de Lamotte and Her Family. — Steps Taken by the Cardinal's Relations. — The Prosecution. — The Clergy Remonstrate. — Decree of the Parliament. — The Queen's Grief. — Remark of Louis XVI.

SHORTLY after the public mind had been thrown into agitation by the performance of the "Mariage de Figaro," an obscure plot, contrived by swindlers, and matured in a corrupted society, attacked the Queen's character in a vital point and assailed the majesty of the throne.

I am about to speak of the notorious affair of the necklace purchased, as it was said, for the Queen by Cardinal de Rohan.¹ I will narrate all that has come to my knowledge relating to this business; the most minute particulars will prove how little reason the

¹ For full details of the affair of the diamond necklace, see the work by M. Emile Campardon, "Marie Antoinette et le Procès du Collier," Paris, Plon, 1863. The "Memoirs" of Madame Campan are frequently quoted in this work, in which the answers of the Cardinal and of the other persons implicated to the interrogations made are given, with an engraving of the too celebrated collar.

Queen had to apprehend the blow by which she was threatened, and which must be attributed to a fatality that human prudence could not have foreseen, but from which, to say the truth, she might have extricated herself with more skill.

I have already said that in 1774 the Queen purchased jewels of Bœhmer to the value of three hundred and sixty thousand francs, that she paid for them herself out of her own private funds, and that it required several years to enable her to complete the payment. The King afterwards presented her with a set of rubies and diamonds of a fine water, and subsequently with a pair of bracelets worth two hundred thousand francs. The Queen, after having her diamonds reset in new patterns, told Bœhmer that she found her jewel case rich enough, and was not desirous of making any addition to it.¹ Still, this jeweller

¹ Except on those days when the assemblies at Court were particularly attended, such as the 1st of January and the 2d of February, devoted to the procession of the Order of the Holy Ghost, and on the festivals of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas, the Queen no longer wore any dresses but muslin or white Florentine taffety. Her head-dress was merely a hat; the plainest were preferred; and her diamonds never quitted their caskets but for the dresses of ceremony, confined to the days I have mentioned. Before the Queen was five and twenty she began to apprehend that she might be induced to make too frequent use of flowers and of ornaments, which at that time were exclusively reserved for youth. Madame Bertin having brought a wreath for the head and neck, composed of roses, the Queen feared that the brightness of the flowers might be disadvantageous to her complexion. She was unquestionably too severe upon herself, her beauty having as yet experienced no alteration; it is easy to conceive the concert of praise and compliment that replied to the doubt she had expressed. The Queen, approaching me, said, "I charge

busied himself for some years in forming a collection of the finest diamonds circulating in the trade, in order to compose a necklace of several rows, which he hoped to induce her Majesty to purchase; he brought it to M. Campan, requesting him to mention it to the Queen, that she might ask to see it, and thus be induced to wish to possess it. This M. Campan refused to do, telling him that he should be stepping out of the line of his duty were he to propose to the Queen an expense of sixteen hundred thousand francs, and that he believed neither the lady of honour nor the tirewoman would take upon herself to execute such a commission. Behmer persuaded the King's first gentleman for the year to show this superb necklace to his Majesty, who admired it so much that he himself wished to see the Queen adorned with it, and sent the case to her; but she assured him she should much regret incurring so great an expense for such an article, that she had already very beautiful diamonds, that jewels of that description were now worn at Court not more than four or five times a year, that the necklace must be returned, and that the money would

you, from this day, to give me notice when flowers shall cease to become me." "I shall do no such thing," I replied, immediately; "I have not read 'Gil Blas' without profiting in some degree from it, and I find your Majesty's order too much like that given him by the Archbishop of Granada, to warn him of the moment when he should begin to fall off in the composition of his homilies." "Go," said the Queen; "You are less sincere than Gil Blas; and I would have been more amenable than the Archbishop." — MADAME CAMPAN.

be much better employed in building a man-of-war.¹ Boehmer, in sad tribulation at finding his expectations delusive, endeavoured for some time, it is said, to dispose of his necklace among the various Courts of Europe.

A year after his fruitless attempts, Boehmer again caused his diamond necklace to be offered to the King, proposing that it should be paid for partly by instalments, and partly in life annuities; this proposal was represented as highly advantageous, and the King, in my presence, mentioned the matter once more to the Queen. I remember the Queen told him that, if the bargain really was not bad, he might make it, and keep the necklace until the marriage of one of his children; but that, for her part, she would never wear it, being unwilling that the world should have to reproach her with having coveted so expensive an article. The King replied that their children were too young to justify such an expense, which would be greatly increased by the number of years the diamonds would remain useless, and that he would finally decline the offer. Boehmer complained to everybody of his misfortune, and all reasonable people

¹ Messieurs Boehmer and Bassange, jewellers to the Crown, were proprietors of a superb diamond necklace, which had, as it was said, been intended for the Comtesse du Barry. Being under the necessity of selling it, they offered it, during the last war, to the King and Queen; but their Majesties made the following prudent answer: "We stand more in need of ships than of jewels." — "Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI."

blamed him for having collected diamonds to so considerable an amount without any positive order for them. This man had purchased the office of jeweller to the Crown, which gave him some rights of entry at Court. After several months spent in ineffectual attempts to carry his point, and in idle complaints, he obtained an audience of the Queen, who had with her the young Princess, her daughter; her Majesty did not know for what purpose Bœhmer sought this audience, and had not the slightest idea that it was to speak to her again about an article twice refused by herself and the King.

Bœhmer threw himself upon his knees, clasped his hands, burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Madame, I am ruined and disgraced if you do not purchase my necklace. I cannot outlive so many misfortunes. When I go hence I shall throw myself into the river."

"Rise, Bœhmer," said the Queen, in a tone sufficiently severe to recall him to himself; "I do not like these rhapsodies; honest men have no occasion to fall on their knees to make their requests. If you were to destroy yourself I should regret you as a madman in whom I had taken an interest, but I should not be in any way responsible for that misfortune. Not only have I never ordered the article which causes your present despair, but whenever you have talked to me about fine collections of jewels I have told you that

I should not add four diamonds to those which I already possessed. I told you myself that I declined taking the necklace; the King wished to give it to me, but I refused him also; never mention it to me again. Divide it and try to sell it piecemeal, and do not drown yourself. I am very angry with you for acting this scene of despair in my presence and before this child. Let me never see you behave thus again. Go." Boehler withdrew, overwhelmed with confusion, and nothing further was then heard of him.

When Madame Sophie was born the Queen told me M. de Saint-James, a rich financier, had apprised her that Boehler was still intent upon the sale of his necklace, and that she ought, for her own satisfaction, to endeavour to learn what the man had done with it; she desired me the first time I should meet him to speak to him about it, as if from the interest I took in his welfare. I spoke to him about his necklace, and he told me he had been very fortunate, having sold it at Constantinople for the favourite sultana. I communicated this answer to the Queen, who was delighted with it, but could not comprehend how the Sultan came to purchase his diamonds in Paris.

The Queen long avoided seeing Boehler, being fearful of his rash character; and her *valet de chambre*, who had the care of her jewels, made the necessary repairs to her ornaments unassisted. On the baptism of the Duc d'Angoulême, in 1785, the King gave

him a diamond epaulet and buckles, and directed Böhmer to deliver them to the Queen. Behmer presented them on her return from mass, and at the same time gave into her hands a letter in the form of a petition. In this paper he told the Queen that he was happy to see her "in possession of the finest diamonds known in Europe," and entreated her not to forget him. The Queen read Behmer's address to her aloud, and saw nothing in it but a proof of mental aberration; she lighted the paper at a wax taper standing near her, as she had some letters to seal, saying, "It is not worth keeping." She afterwards much regretted the loss of this enigmatical memorial. After having burnt the paper, her Majesty said to me, "That man is born to be my torment; he has always some mad scheme in his head; remember, the first time you see him, to tell him that I do not like diamonds now, and that I will buy no more so long as I live; that if I had any money to spare I would rather add to my property at St. Cloud by the purchase of the land surrounding it; now, mind you enter into all these particulars and impress them well upon him." I asked her whether she wished me to send for him; she replied in the negative, adding that it would be sufficient to avail myself of the first opportunity afforded by meeting him; and that the slightest advance towards such a man would be misplaced.

On the 1st of August I left Versailles for my country house at Crespy; on the 3d came Boehler, extremely uneasy at not having received any answer from the Queen, to ask me whether I had any commission from her to him; I replied that she had entrusted me with none; that she had no commands for him, and I faithfully repeated all she had desired me to say to him.

"But," said Boehler, "the answer to the letter I presented to her,—to whom must I apply for that?"

"To nobody," answered I; "her Majesty burnt your memorial without even comprehending its meaning."

"Ah! madame," exclaimed he, "that is impossible; the Queen knows that she has money to pay me!"

"Money, M. Boehler? Your last accounts against the Queen were discharged long ago."

"Madame, you are not in the secret. A man who is ruined for want of payment of fifteen hundred thousand francs cannot be said to be satisfied."

"Have you lost your senses?" said I. "For what can the Queen owe you so extravagant a sum?"

"For my necklace, madame," replied Boehler, coolly.

"What!" I exclaimed, "that necklace again, which you have teased the Queen about so many years! Did you not tell me you had sold it at Constantinople?"

"The Queen desired me to give that answer to all

who should speak to me on the subject," said the wretched dupe. He then told me that the Queen wished to have the necklace, and had had it purchased for her by Monseigneur, the Cardinal de Rohan.

"You are deceived," I exclaimed; "the Queen has not once spoken to the Cardinal since his return from Vienna; there is not a man at her Court less favourably looked upon."

"You are deceived yourself, madame," said Boehmer; "she sees him so much in private that it was to his Eminence she gave thirty thousand francs, which were paid me as an instalment; she took them, in his presence, out of the little *secrétaire* of Sèvres porcelain next the fireplace in her boudoir."

"And the Cardinal told you all this?"

"Yes, madame, himself."

"What a detestable plot!" cried I.

"Indeed, to say the truth, madame, I begin to be much alarmed, for his Eminence assured me that the Queen would wear the necklace on Whit-Sunday, but I did not see it upon her, and it was that which induced me to write to her Majesty."

He then asked me what he ought to do. I advised him to go on to Versailles, instead of returning to Paris, whence he had just arrived; to obtain an immediate audience from the Baron de Breteuil, who, as head of the King's household, was the minister of the

department to which Bœhmer belonged, and to be circumspect; and I added that he appeared to me extremely culpable,—not as a diamond merchant, but because being a sworn officer it was unpardonable of him to have acted without the direct orders of the King, the Queen, or the Minister. He answered, that he had not acted without direct orders; that he had in his possession all the notes signed by the Queen, and that he had even been obliged to show them to several bankers in order to induce them to extend the time for his payments. I urged his departure for Versailles, and he assured me he would go there immediately. Instead of following my advice, he went to the Cardinal, and it was of this visit of Bœhmer's that his Eminence made a memorandum, found in a drawer overlooked by the Abbé Georgel when he burnt, by order of the Cardinal, all the papers which the latter had at Paris. The memorandum was thus worded: "On this day, 3d August, Bœhmer went to Madame Campan's country house, and she told him that the Queen had never had his necklace, and that he had been deceived."

When Bœhmer was gone, I wanted to follow him, and go to the Queen; my father-in-law prevented me, and ordered me to leave the minister to elucidate such an important affair, observing that it was an infernal plot; that I had given Bœhmer the best advice, and had nothing more to do with the busi-

ness. Bœhmer never said one word to me about the woman De Lamotte, and her name was mentioned for the first time by the Cardinal in his answers to the interrogatories put to him before the King. After seeing the Cardinal, Bœhmer went to Trianon, and sent a message to the Queen, purporting that I had advised him to come and speak to her. His very words were repeated to her Majesty, who said, "He is mad; I have nothing to say to him, and will not see him." Two or three days afterwards the Queen sent for me to Petit Trianon, to rehearse with me the part of Rosina, which she was to perform in the "Barbier de Séville." I was alone with her, sitting upon her couch; no mention was made of anything but the part. After we had spent an hour in the rehearsal, her Majesty asked me why I had sent Bœhmer to her; saying he had been in my name to speak to her, and that she would not see him. It was in this manner I learnt that he had not followed my advice in the slightest degree. The change of my countenance, when I heard the man's name, was very perceptible; the Queen perceived it, and questioned me. I entreated her to see him, and assured her it was of the utmost importance for her peace of mind; that there was a plot going on, of which she was not aware; and that it was a serious one, since engagements signed by herself were shown about to people who had lent Bœhmer money. Her surprise and vexation were

great. She desired me to remain at Trianon, and sent off a courier to Paris, ordering Bœhmer to come to her upon some pretext which has escaped my recollection. He came next morning; in fact it was the day on which the play was performed, and that was the last amusement the Queen allowed herself at that retreat.

The Queen made him enter her closet, and asked him by what fatality it was that she was still doomed to hear of his foolish pretence of selling her an article which she had steadily refused for several years. He replied that he was compelled, being unable to pacify his creditors any longer. "What are your creditors to me?" said her Majesty. Bœhmer then regularly related to her all that he had been made to believe had passed between the Queen and himself through the intervention of the Cardinal. She was equally incensed and surprised at each thing she heard. In vain did she speak; the jeweller, equally importunate and dangerous, repeated incessantly, "Madame, there is no longer time for feigning; condescend to confess that you have my necklace, and let some assistance be given to me, or my bankruptcy will soon bring the whole to light."

It is easy to imagine how the Queen must have suffered. On Bœhmer's going away, I found her in an alarming condition; the idea that any one could have believed that such a man as the Cardinal

possessed her full confidence; that she should have employed him to deal with a tradesman without the King's knowledge, for a thing which she had refused to accept from the King himself, drove her to desperation. She sent first for the Abbé de Vermond, and then for the Baron de Breteuil. Their hatred and contempt for the Cardinal made them too easily forget that the lowest faults do not prevent the higher orders of the empire from being defended by those to whom they have the honour to belong; that a Rohan, a Prince of the Church, however culpable he might be, would be sure to have a considerable party which would naturally be joined by all the discontented persons of the Court, and all the *frondeurs* of Paris. They too easily believed that he would be stripped of all the advantages of his rank and order, and given up to the disgrace due to his irregular conduct; they deceived themselves.

I saw the Queen after the departure of the Baron and the Abbé; her agitation made me shudder. "Fraud must be unmasked," said she; "when the Roman purple and the title of Prince cover a mere money-seeker, a cheat who dares to compromise the wife of his sovereign, France and all Europe should know it." It is evident that from that moment the fatal plan was decided on. The Queen perceived my alarm; I did not conceal it from her. I knew too well that she had many enemies not to be apprehen-

sive on seeing her attract the attention of the whole world to an intrigue that they would try to complicate still more. I entreated her to seek the most prudent and moderate advice. She silenced me by desiring me to make myself easy, and to rest satisfied that no imprudence would be committed.

On the following Sunday, the 15th of August, being the Assumption, at twelve o'clock, at the very moment when the Cardinal, dressed in his pontifical garments, was about to proceed to the chapel, he was sent for into the King's closet, where the Queen then was.

The King said to him, "You have purchased diamonds of Bœhmer?"

"Yes, Sire."

"What have you done with them?"

"I thought they had been delivered to the Queen."

"Who commissioned you?"

"A lady, called the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois, who handed me a letter from the Queen; and I thought I was gratifying her Majesty by taking this business on myself."

The Queen here interrupted him and said, "How, monsieur, could you believe that I should select you, to whom I have not spoken for eight years, to negotiate anything for me, and especially through the mediation of a woman whom I do not even know?"

"I see plainly," said the Cardinal, "that I have

been duped. I will pay for the necklace; my desire to please your Majesty blinded me; I suspected no trick in the affair, and I am sorry for it."

He then took out of his pocket-book a letter from the Queen to Madame de Lamotte, giving him this commission. The King took it, and, holding it towards the Cardinal, said:

"This is neither written nor signed by the Queen. How could a Prince of the House of Rohan, and a Grand Almoner of France, ever think that the Queen would sign *Marie Antoinette de France*? Everybody knows that queens sign only by their baptismal names.¹ But, monsieur," pursued the King, handing him a copy of his letter to Bœhmer, "have you ever written such a letter as this?"

Having glanced over it, the Cardinal said, "I do not remember having written it."

"But what if the original, signed by yourself, were shown to you?"

"If the letter be signed by myself it is genuine."

He was extremely confused, and repeated several

¹ The Cardinal ought, it has been said, to have detected the forgery of the approbations and signature to the instruction; his place of Grand Almoner gave him the opportunity of knowing both her Majesty's writing and her manner of signing her name. To this important objection it is answered, that it was long since M. de Rohan had seen her writing; that he did not recollect it; that, besides, not being at all suspicious, he had no inducement to endeavour to verify it; and that the Crown jewelers, to whom he showed the instrument, had not, any more than himself, detected the imposition. — "Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI."

times, "I have been deceived, Sire; I will pay for the necklace. I ask pardon of your Majesties."

"Then explain to me," resumed the King, "the whole of this enigma. I do not wish to find you guilty; I had rather you would justify yourself. Account for all the manœuvres with Bœhmer, these assurances and these letters."

The Cardinal then, turning pale, and leaning against the table, said, "Sire, I am too much confused to answer your Majesty in a way —"

"Compose yourself, Cardinal, and go into my cabinet; you will there find paper, pens, and ink, — write what you have to say to me."

The Cardinal went into the King's cabinet, and returned a quarter of an hour afterwards with a document as confused as his verbal answers had been. The King then said, "Withdraw, monsieur." The Cardinal left the King's chamber, with the Baron de Breteuil, who gave him in custody to a lieutenant of the Body Guard, with orders to take him to his apartment. M. d'Agoult, aide-major of the Body Guard, afterwards took him into custody, and conducted him to his hôtel, and thence to the Bastille. But while the Cardinal had with him only the young lieutenant of the Body Guard, who was much embarrassed at having such an order to execute, his Eminence met his *heyduc* at the door of the Salon of Hercules; he spoke to him in German,

and then asked the lieutenant if he could lend him a pencil; the officer gave him that which he carried about him, and the Cardinal wrote to the Abbé Georgel, his grand vicar and friend, instantly to burn all Madame de Lamotte's correspondence, and all his other letters.¹ This commission was executed before M. de Crosne, lieutenant of police, had received an order from the Baron de Breteuil to put seals upon the Cardinal's papers. The destruction of all his Eminence's correspondence, and particularly that with Madame de Lamotte, threw an impenetrable cloud over the whole affair.

¹ The Abbé Georgel thus relates the circumstance:

"The Cardinal, at that trying moment, gave an astonishing proof of his presence of mind; notwithstanding the escort which surrounded him, favoured by the attendant crowd, he stopped, and stooping down with his face towards the wall, as if to fasten his buckle, snatched out his pencil and hastily wrote a few words upon a scrap of paper placed under his hand in his square red cap. He rose again and proceeded. On entering his house, his people formed a lane; he slipped this paper, unperceived, into the hand of a confidential *valet de chambre*, who waited for him at the door of his apartment." This story is scarcely credible; it is not at the moment of a prisoner's arrest, when an inquisitive crowd surrounds and watches him, that he can stop and write secret messages. However, the *valet de chambre* posts off to Paris. He arrives at the palace of the Cardinal between twelve and one o'clock; and his horse falls dead in the stable. "I was in my apartment," said the Abbé Georgel, "the *valet de chambre* entered wildly, with a deadly paleness on his countenance, and exclaimed, '*All is lost; the Prince is arrested.*' He instantly fell, fainting, and dropped the note of which he was the bearer." The portfolio containing the papers which might compromise the Cardinal was immediately placed beyond the reach of all search. Madame de Lamotte also was foolishly allowed sufficient time after she heard of the arrest of the Cardinal to burn all the letters she had received from him. Assisted by Beugnot, she completed this at three the same morning that she was arrested at four. — See "Memoirs of Comte de Beugnot," vol i., p. 74.

From that moment all proofs of this intrigue disappeared. Madame de Lamotte was apprehended at Bar-sur-Aube; her husband had already gone to England. From the beginning of this fatal affair all the proceedings of the Court appear to have been prompted by imprudence and want of foresight; the obscurity resulting left free scope for the fables of which the voluminous memorials written on one side and the other consisted. The Queen so little imagined what could have given rise to the intrigue, of which she was about to become the victim, that, at the moment when the King was interrogating the Cardinal, a terrific idea entered her mind. With that rapidity of thought caused by personal interest and extreme agitation, she fancied that, if a design to ruin her in the eyes of the King and the French people were the concealed motive of this intrigue, the Cardinal would, perhaps, affirm that she had the necklace; that he had been honoured with her confidence for this purchase, made without the King's knowledge; and point out some secret place in her apartment, where he might have got some villain to hide it. Want of money and the meanest swindling were the sole motives for this criminal affair. The necklace had already been taken to pieces and sold, partly in London, partly in Holland, and the rest in Paris.

The moment the Cardinal's arrest was known a universal clamour arose. Every memorial that appeared

during the trial increased the outcry. On this occasion the clergy took that course which a little wisdom and the least knowledge of the spirit of such a body ought to have foreseen. The Rohans and the House of Condé, as well as the clergy, made their complaints heard everywhere. The King consented to having a legal judgment, and early in September he addressed letters-patent to the Parliament, in which he said that he was "filled with the most just indignation on seeing the means which, by the confession of his Eminence the Cardinal, had been employed in order to inculcate his most dear spouse and companion."

Fatal moment! in which the Queen found herself, in consequence of this highly impolitic step, on trial with a subject, who ought to have been dealt with by the power of the King alone. The Princes and Princesses of the House of Condé, and of the Houses of Rohan, Soubise, and Guéménée, put on mourning, and were seen ranged in the way of the members of the Grand Chamber to salute them as they proceeded to the palace, on the days of the Cardinal's trial; and Princes of the blood openly canvassed against the Queen of France.

The Pope wished to claim, on behalf of the Cardinal de Rohan, the right belonging to his ecclesiastical rank, and demanded that he should be judged at Rome. The Cardinal de Bernis, ambassador from France to his Holiness, formerly Minister for Foreign Affairs,

blending the wisdom of an old diplomatist with the principles of a Prince of the Church, wished that this scandalous affair should be hushed up. The King's aunts, who were on very intimate terms with the ambassador, adopted his opinion, and the conduct of the King and Queen was equally and loudly censured in the apartments of Versailles and in the hôtels and coffee-houses of Paris.

Madame, the King's sister-in-law, had been the sole protectress of De Lamotte, and had confined her patronage to granting her a pension of twelve to fifteen hundred francs. Her brother was in the navy, but the Marquis de Chabert, to whom he had been recommended, could never train a good officer. The Queen in vain endeavoured to call to mind the features of this person, of whom she had often heard as an intriguing woman, who came frequently on Sundays to the gallery of Versailles. At the time when all France was engrossed by the persecution against the Cardinal, the portrait of the Comtesse de Lamotte-Valois was publicly sold. Her Majesty desired me one day, when I was going to Paris, to buy her the engraving, which was said to be a tolerable likeness, that she might ascertain whether she could recognise in it any person whom she might have seen in the gallery.¹

¹ The public, with the exception of the lowest class, were admitted into the gallery and larger apartments of Versailles, as they were into the park. — MADAME CAMPAN.

The woman De Lamotte's father was a peasant at Auteuil, though he called himself Valois. Madame de Boulainvilliers once saw from her terrace two pretty little peasant girls, each labouring under a heavy bundle of sticks. The priest of the village, who was walking with her, told her that the children possessed some curious papers, and that he had no doubt they were descendants of a Valois, an illegitimate son of one of the princes of that name.¹

The family of Valois had long ceased to appear in the world. Hereditary vices had gradually plunged them into the deepest misery. I have heard that the last Valois then known occupied the estate called Gros Bois; that as he seldom came to Court, Louis XIII. asked him what he was about that he remained so constantly in the country; and that this M. de Valois merely answered, "Sire, I only do there what I ought."² It was shortly afterwards discovered that he was *coining*.

Neither the Queen herself nor any one near her

¹ Madame de Lamotte (Jeanne de Saint-Rémi de Valois) was born at Fontette, in the department of the Aube, 22d July, 1756. She was the second child of Jacques de Saint-Rémi de Valois, who at first called himself De Luz, and later De Valois, Baron de Saint-Rémi, the seventh in descent from Henri de Saint-Rémi, the son of Henri II., King of France, and of Nicole de Savigny, Dame de Saint-Rémi, de Fontette, du Châtelier and de Noëz. — "Marie Antoinette et le Procès du Collier," Paris, Plon, 1863, p. 14.

² *Je n'y fais que ce que je dois*, which also means, "I only make what I owe," and in that sense was a true answer, as well as an unusual evidence of his moderation.

ever had the slightest connection with the woman De Lamotte ; and during her prosecution she could point out but one of the Queen's servants, named Desclos, a valet of the Queen's bedchamber, to whom she pretended she had delivered Bœhmer's necklace. This Desclos was a very honest man ; upon being confronted with the woman De Lamotte, it was proved that she had never seen him but once, which was at the house of the wife of a surgeon-accoucheur at Versailles, the only person she visited at Court ; and that she had not given him the necklace. Madame de Lamotte married a private in Monsieur's body-guard ; she lodged at Versailles at the Belle Image, a very inferior furnished house ; and it is inconceivable how so obscure a person could succeed in making herself believed to be a friend of the Queen, who, though so extremely affable, seldom granted audiences, and only to titled persons.

The trial of the Cardinal is too generally known to require me to repeat its details here. The point most embarrassing to him was the interview he had in February, 1785, with M. de Saint-James, to whom he confided the particulars of the Queen's pretended commission, and showed the contract approved and signed *Marie Antoinette de France*. The memorandum found in a drawer of the Cardinal's bureau, in which he had himself written what Bœhmer told him after having seen me at my coun-

try house, was likewise an unfortunate document for his Eminence.

I offered to the King to go and declare that Bœhmer had told me that the Cardinal assured him he had received from the Queen's own hand the thirty thousand francs given on account upon the bargain being concluded, and that his Eminence had seen her Majesty take that sum in bills from the porcelain *secrétaire* in her boudoir. The King declined my offer, and said to me, "Were you alone when Bœhmer told you this?" I answered that I was alone with him in my garden. "Well," resumed he, "the man would deny the fact; he is now sure of being paid his six-hundred thousand francs, which the Cardinal's family will find it necessary to make good to him;¹ we can no longer rely upon his sincerity; it would look as if you were sent by the Queen, and that would not be proper."

The *procureur-général's* information was severe on the Cardinal. The Houses of Condé and Rohan and the majority of the nobility saw in this affair only an

¹ The guilty woman no sooner knew that all was about to be discovered than she sent for the jewellers, and told them the Cardinal had perceived that the agreement, which he believed to have been signed by the Queen, was a false and forged document. "However," added she, "the Cardinal possesses a considerable fortune, and he can very well pay you." These words reveal the whole secret. The Countess had taken the necklace to herself, and flattered herself that M. de Rohan, seeing himself deceived and cruelly imposed upon, would determine to pay and make the best terms he could, rather than suffer a matter of this nature to become public. — "Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI."

attack on the Prince's rank, the clergy only a blow aimed at the privileges of a cardinal. The clergy demanded that the unfortunate business of the Prince Cardinal de Rohan should be submitted to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the Archbishop of Narbonne, then President of the Convocation, made representations upon the subject to the King; the bishops wrote to his Majesty to remind him that a private ecclesiastic implicated in the affair then pending would have a right to claim his constitutional judges, and that this right was refused to a cardinal, his superior in the hierarchical order. In short, the clergy and the greater part of the nobility were at that time outrageous against authority, and chiefly against the Queen.

The *procureur-général's* conclusions, and those of a part of the heads of the magistracy, were as severe towards the Cardinal as the information had been; yet he was *fully acquitted* by a majority of three voices; the woman De Lamotte was condemned to be whipped, branded, and imprisoned; and her husband, for contumacy, was condemned to the galleys for life.¹

¹ The following extract is from the "Mémoires" of the Abbé Georgel: "The sittings were long and multiplied; it was necessary to read the whole proceedings; more than fifty judges sat; a master of requests, a friend of the Prince, wrote down all that was said there, and sent it to his advisers, who found means to inform the Cardinal of it, and to add the plan of conduct he ought to pursue." D'Epreménil, and other young counsellors, showed upon that occasion but too much audacity in braving

M. Pierre de Laurencel, the *procureur-général's* substitute, sent the Queen a list of the names of the members of the Grand Chamber, with the means made use of by the friends of the Cardinal to gain their votes during the trial. I had this list to keep among the papers which the Queen deposited in the house of M. Campan, my father-in-law, and which, at his death, she ordered me to preserve. I burnt this statement, but I remember ladies performed a part not very creditable to their principles; it was by them, in consideration of large sums which they received, that some of the oldest and most respected members were won over. I did not see a single name amongst the whole Parliament that was gained directly.

The belief confirmed by time is, that the Cardinal was completely duped by the woman De Lamotte and Cagliostro. The King may have been in error in thinking him an accomplice in this miserable and criminal scheme, but I have faithfully repeated his Majesty's judgment about it.

However, the generally received opinion that the Baron de Breteuil's hatred for the Cardinal was the cause of the scandal and the unfortunate result of this affair contributed to the disgrace of the former

the Court, too much eagerness in seizing an opportunity of attacking it. They were the first to shake that authority which their functions made it a duty in them to respect. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The Reveille



still more than his refusal to give his granddaughter in marriage to the son of the Duc de Polignac. The Abbé de Vermond threw the whole blame of the imprudence and impolicy of the affair of the Cardinal de Rohan upon the minister, and ceased to be the friend and supporter of the Baron de Breteuil with the Queen.

In the early part of the year 1786, the Cardinal, as has been said, was fully acquitted, and came out of the Bastille, while Madame de Lamotte was condemned to be whipped, branded, and imprisoned. The Court, persisting in the erroneous views which had hitherto guided its measures, conceived that the Cardinal and the woman De Lamotte were equally culpable and unequally punished, and sought to restore the balance of justice by exiling the Cardinal to La Chaise-Dieu, and suffering Madame de Lamotte to escape a few days after she entered l'Hôpital. This new error confirmed the Parisians in the idea that the wretch De Lamotte, who had never been able to make her way so far as to the room appropriated to the Queen's women, had really interested the Queen herself.¹

¹ Further particulars will be found in the "Memoirs of the Comte de Beugnot" (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1871), as he knew Madame de Lamotte from the days of her early childhood (when the three children, the Baron de Valois, who died captain of a frigate, and the two Mademoiselles de Saint-Rémi, the last descendants of the Baron de Saint-Rémi, a natural son of Henri II., were almost starving) to the time of her temporary prosperity. In fact, he was with her when she burnt the correspond-

ance of the Cardinal, in the interval the Court foolishly allowed between his arrest and her capture, and De Beugnot believed he had met at her house, at the moment of their return from their successful trick, the whole party engaged in deluding the Cardinal. It is worth noting that he was then struck by the face of Mademoiselle d'Oliva, who had just personated the Queen in presenting a rose to the Cardinal. It may also be cited as a pleasing quality of Madame de Lamotte that she, "in her ordinary conversation, used the words *stupid* and *honest* as synonymous." — See "Beugnot," vol. I., p. 60.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Archbishop of Sens Is Appointed to the Ministry. — The Abbé de Vermond's Joy on the Occasion. — The Queen Is Obligated to Take a Part in Business. — Money Sent to Vienna Contrary to Her Inclination. — Anecdotes. — The Queen Supports the Archbishop of Sens in Office. — Public Rejoicings on His Dismissal. — Opening of the States General. — Cries of "*Vive le Duc d'Orléans!*" — Their Effect upon the Queen. — Mirabeau. — He Requests an Embassy. — Misfortunes Induce the Queen to Yield to Superstitious Fears. — Anecdotes. — Prejudices of the Provincial Deputies of the *Tiers Etat*. — Causes of These Prejudices. — Death of the First Dauphin. — Anecdotes.

THE Abbé de Vermond could not repress his exultation when he succeeded in getting the Archbishop of Sens appointed head of the council of finance. I have more than once heard him say that seventeen years of patience were not too long a term for success in a Court; that he spent all that time in gaining the end he had in view; but that at length the Archbishop was where he ought to be for the good of the State. The Abbé, from this time, in the Queen's private circle no longer concealed his credit and influence; nothing could equal the confidence with which he displayed the extent

of his pretensions. He requested the Queen to order that the apartments appropriated to him should be enlarged, telling her that, being obliged to give audiences to bishops, cardinals, and ministers, he required a residence suitable to his present circumstances. The Queen continued to treat him as she did before the Archbishop's arrival at Court; but the household showed him increased consideration: the word "Monsieur" preceded that of Abbé; and from that moment not only the livery servants, but also the people of the antechambers rose when Monsieur l'Abbé was passing, though there never was, to my knowledge, any order given to that effect.

The Queen was obliged, on account of the King's disposition and the very limited confidence he placed in the Archbishop of Sens, to take a part in public affairs. While M. de Maurepas lived she kept out of that danger, as may be seen by the censure which the Baron de Besenval passes on her in his memoirs for not availing herself of the conciliation he had promoted between the Queen and that minister, who counteracted the ascendancy which the Queen and her intimate friends might otherwise have gained over the King's mind.

The Queen has often assured me that she never interfered respecting the interests of Austria but once; and that was only to claim the execution of the treaty of alliance at the time when Joseph II.

was at war with Prussia and Turkey; that she then demanded that an army of twenty-four thousand men should be sent to him instead of fifteen millions, an alternative which had been left to option in the treaty, in case the Emperor should have a just war to maintain; that she could not obtain her object, and M. de Vergennes, in an interview which she had with him upon the subject, put an end to her importunities by observing that he was answering the mother of the Dauphin and not the sister of the Emperor. The fifteen millions were sent. There was no want of money at Vienna, and the value of a French army was fully appreciated.

"But how," said the Queen, "could they be so wicked as to send off those fifteen millions from the general post-office, diligently publishing, even to the street porters, that they were loading carriages with money that I was sending to my brother!—whereas it is certain that the money would equally have been sent if I had belonged to another house; and, besides, it was sent contrary to my inclination."¹

¹ This was not the first time the Queen had become unpopular in consequence of financial support afforded by France to her brother. The Emperor Joseph II. made, in November, 1783, and in May, 1784, startling claims on the republic of the United Provinces; he demanded the opening of the Scheldt, the cession of Maastricht with its dependencies, of the country beyond the Meuse, the county of Vroenhoven, and a sum of seventy millions of florins. The first gun was fired by the Emperor on the Scheldt 5th November, 1784. Peace was concluded 8th November, 1785, through the mediation of France. The singular part was the indemnification granted to the Emperor: this was a sum of ten millions of Dutch

When the Comte de Moustier set out on his mission to the United States, after having had his public audience of leave he came and asked me to procure him a private one. I could not succeed even with the strongest solicitations; the Queen desired me to wish him a good voyage, but added that none but ministers could have anything to say to him in private, since he was going to a country where the names of *King* and *Queen* must be detested.

Marie Antoinette had then no direct influence over State affairs until after the deaths of M. de Maurepas and M. de Vergennes, and the retirement of M. de Calonne. She frequently regretted her new situation, and looked upon it as a misfortune which she could not avoid. One day, while I was assisting her to tie up a number of memorials and reports, which some of the ministers had handed to her to be given to the King, "Ah!" said she, sighing, "there is an

florins; the articles 15, 16, and 17 of the treaty stipulated the quotas of it. Holland paid five millions and a half, and France, under the direction of M. de Vergennes, four millions and a half of florins, that is to say, nine millions and forty-five thousand francs, according to M. Soulavie. M. de Ségur, in his "*Policy of Cabinets*" (vol. iii.), says relative to this affair:

"M. de Vergennes has been much blamed for having terminated, by a sacrifice of seven millions, the contest that existed between the United Provinces and the Emperor. In that age of philosophy men were still very uncivilised; in that age of commerce they made very erroneous calculations; and those who accused the Queen of sending the gold of France to her brother would have been better pleased if, to support a republic devoid of energy, the blood of two hundred thousand men, and three or four hundred millions of francs, had been sacrificed, and at the same time the risk run of losing the advantage of peace dictated to England." — MADAME CAMPAN.

end of all happiness for me, since they have made an intriguer of me." I exclaimed at the word. "Yes," resumed the Queen, "that is the right term; every woman who meddles with affairs above her understanding or out of her line of duty is an intriguer and nothing else; you will remember, however, that it is not my own fault, and that it is with regret I give myself such a title; Queens of France are happy only so long as they meddle with nothing, and merely preserve influence sufficient to advance their friends and reward a few zealous servants. Do you know what happened to me lately? One day since I began to attend private committees at the King's, while crossing the *œil-de-bœuf*, I heard one of the musicians of the chapel say so loud that I lost not a single word, 'A Queen who does her duty will remain in her apartment to knit.' I said within myself, 'Poor wretch, thou art right; but thou knowest not my situation; I yield to necessity and my evil destiny.'"

This situation was the more painful to the Queen inasmuch as Louis XVI. had long accustomed himself to say nothing to her respecting State affairs; and when, towards the close of his reign, she was obliged to interfere in the most important matters, the same habit in the King frequently kept from her particulars which it was necessary she should have known. Obtaining, therefore, only insufficient in-

formation, and guided by persons more ambitious than skilful, the Queen could not be useful in important affairs; yet, at the same time, her ostensible interference drew upon her, from all parties and all classes of society, an unpopularity the rapid progress of which alarmed all those who were sincerely attached to her.¹

Carried away by the eloquence of the Archbishop of Sens, and encouraged in the confidence she placed in that minister by the incessant eulogies of the Abbé de Vermond on his abilities, the Queen unfortunately followed up her first mistake of bringing him into office in 1787 by supporting him at the time of his disgrace, which was obtained by the despair of a whole nation. She thought it was due to her dignity to give him some marked proof of her regard at the moment of his departure; misled by her feelings, she sent him her portrait enriched with jewelry, and a brevet for the situation of lady of the palace for Madame de Canisy, his niece, observing that it was necessary to indemnify a minister sacrificed to the intrigues of the Court and a factious spirit of the nation; that otherwise none would be found willing to devote themselves to the interests of the sovereign.

¹ In a caricature of the time the King was represented at table with his consort. He had a glass in his hand; the Queen was raising a morsel to her lips; the people were crowding round with their mouths open. Below was written, "The King drinks; the Queen eats; the people cry out." — "Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XVI.," vol. 1.

On the day of the Archbishop's departure the public joy was universal, both at Court and at Paris: there were bonfires; the attorneys' clerks burnt the Archbishop in effigy, and on the evening of his disgrace more than a hundred couriers were sent out from Versailles to spread the happy tidings among the country seats. I have seen the Queen shed bitter tears at the recollection of the errors she committed at this period, when subsequently, a short time before her death, the Archbishop had the audacity to say, in a speech which was printed, that the sole object of one part of his operations, during his administration, was the salutary crisis which the Revolution had produced.

The benevolence and generosity shown by the King and Queen during the severe winter of 1788, when the Seine was frozen over and the cold was more intense than it had been for eighty years, procured them some fleeting popularity. The gratitude of the Parisians for the succour their Majesties poured forth was lively if not lasting. The snow was so abundant that since that period there has never been seen such a prodigious quantity in France. In different parts of Paris pyramids and obelisks of snow were erected with inscriptions expressive of the gratitude of the people. The pyramid in the Rue d'Angiviller was supported on a base six feet high by twelve broad; it rose to the height of fifteen feet, and was terminated

by a globe. Four blocks of stone, placed at the angles, corresponded with the obelisk, and gave it an elegant appearance. Several inscriptions, in honour of the King and Queen, were affixed to it. I went to see this singular monument, and recollect the following inscription :

" TO MARIE ANTOINETTE.

"Lovely and good, to tender pity true,
 Queen of a virtuous King, this trophy view;
 Cold ice and snow sustain its fragile form,
 But ev'ry grateful heart to thee is warm.
 Oh, may this tribute in your hearts excite,
 Illustrious pair, more pure and real delight,
 Whilst thus your virtues are sincerely prais'd,
 Than pompous domes by servile flatt'ry rais'd."

The theatres generally rang with praises of the beneficence of the sovereigns: "La Partie de Chasse de Henri IV." was represented for the benefit of the poor. The receipts were very considerable.

When the fruitless measure of the Assembly of the Notables,¹ and the rebellious spirit in the parliaments,

¹ The Assembly of the Notables, as may be seen in Weber's "Memoirs," vol. i., overthrew the plans and caused the downfall of M. de Calonne. A prince of the blood presided over each of the meetings of that assembly. Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII., presided over the first meeting.

"Monsieur," says a contemporary, "gained great reputation at the Assembly of the Notables in 1787. He did not miss attending his meeting a single day, and he displayed truly patriotic virtues. His care in discussing the weighty matters of administration, in throwing light upon them, and in defending the interests and the cause of the people, was such as even to inspire the King with some degree of jealousy. Monsieur

had created the necessity for States General, it was long discussed in council whether they should be assembled at Versailles or at forty or sixty leagues from the capital; the Queen was for the latter course, and insisted to the King that they ought to be far away from the immense population of Paris. She feared that the people would influence the deliberations of the deputies; several memorials were presented to the King upon that question; but M. Necker prevailed, and Versailles was the place fixed upon.

The day on which the King announced that he gave his consent to the convocation of the States General, the Queen left the public dinner, and placed herself in the recess of the first window of her bedchamber, with her face towards the garden. Her chief butler followed her, to present her coffee, which she usually took standing, as she was about to leave the table. She beckoned to me to come close to her. The King was engaged in conversation with some one in his room. When the attendant had served her he retired; and she addressed me, with the cup still in her hand: "Great Heavens! what fatal news goes forth this day! The King assents to the convocation of the States General." Then she added, raising her eyes to heaven, "I dread it; this important event is a

openly said that a respectful resistance to the orders of the monarch was not blamable, and that authority might be met by argument, and forced to receive information without any offence whatever." — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

first fatal signal of discord in France." She cast her eyes down, they were filled with tears. She could not take the remainder of her coffee, but handed me the cup, and went to join the King. In the evening, when she was alone with me, she spoke only of this momentous decision. "It is the Parliament," said she, "that has compelled the King to have recourse to a measure long considered fatal to the repose of the kingdom. These gentlemen wish to restrain the power of the King; but they give a great shock to the authority of which they make so bad a use, and they will bring on their own destruction."

The double representation granted to the *Tiers Etat* was now the chief topic of conversation. The Queen favoured this plan, to which the King had agreed; she thought the hope of obtaining ecclesiastical favours would secure the clergy of the second order, and that M. Necker was sure to have the same degree of influence over the lawyers, and other people of that class comprised in the *Tiers Etat*. The Comte d'Artois, holding the contrary opinion, presented a memorial in the names of himself and several princes of the blood to the King against the double representation. The Queen was displeased with him for this; her confidential advisers infused into her apprehensions that the Prince was made the tool of a party; but his conduct was approved of by Madame de Polignac's circle, which the Queen thenceforward only frequented to

avoid the appearance of a change in her habits. She almost always returned unhappy; she was treated with the profound respect due to a queen, but the devotion of friendship had vanished, to make way for the coldness of etiquette, which wounded her deeply. The alienation between her and the Comte d'Artois was also very painful to her, for she had loved him almost as tenderly as if he had been her own brother.

The opening of the States General took place on the 4th of May, 1789. The Queen on that occasion appeared for the last time in her life in regal magnificence. During the procession some low women, seeing the Queen pass, cried out "*Vive le Duc d'Orléans!*" in so threatening a manner that she nearly fainted. She was obliged to be supported, and those about her were afraid it would be necessary to stop the procession. The Queen, however, recovered herself, and much regretted that she had not been able to command more presence of mind.

The rapidly increasing distrust of the King and Queen shown by the populace was greatly attributable to incessant corruption by English gold, and the projects, either of revenge or of ambition, of the Duc d'Orléans. Let it not be thought that this accusation is founded on what has been so often repeated by the heads of the French Government since the Revolution. Twice between the 14th of July and the 6th of October, 1789, the day on which the Court was

dragged to Paris, the Queen prevented me from making little excursions thither of business or pleasure, saying to me, "Do not go on such a day to Paris; the English have been scattering gold, we shall have some disturbance." The repeated visits of the Duc d'Orléans to England had excited the Anglomania to such a pitch that Paris was no longer distinguishable from London. The French, formerly imitated by the whole of Europe, became on a sudden a nation of imitators, without considering the evils that arts and manufactures must suffer in consequence of the change. Since the treaty of commerce made with England at the peace of 1783, not merely equipages, but everything, even to ribands and common earthenware, were of English make. If this predominance of English fashions had been confined to filling our drawing-rooms with young men in English frock-coats, instead of the French dress, good taste and commerce might alone have suffered; but the principles of English government had taken possession of these young heads. *Constitution, Upper House, Lower House, national guarantee, balance of power, Magna Charta, Law of Habeas Corpus*,—all these words were incessantly repeated, and seldom understood; but they were of fundamental importance to a party which was then forming.

The first sitting of the States took place on the

following day. The King delivered his speech with firmness and dignity; the Queen told me that he had taken great pains about it, and had repeated it frequently. His Majesty gave public marks of attachment and respect for the Queen, who was applauded; but it was easy to see that this applause was in fact rendered to the King alone.

It was evident, during the first sittings, that Mirabeau would be very dangerous to the Government. It affirmed that at this period he communicated to the King, and still more fully to the Queen, part of his schemes for abandoning them. He brandished the weapons afforded him by his eloquence and audacity, in order to make terms with the party he meant to attack. This man played the game of revolution to make his own fortune. The Queen told me that he asked for an embassy, and, if my memory does not deceive me, it was that of Constantinople. He was refused with well-deserved contempt, though policy would doubtless have concealed it, could the future have been foreseen.¹

The enthusiasm prevailing at the opening of this assembly, and the debates between the *Tiers Etat*, the nobility, and even the clergy, daily increased the alarm of their Majesties, and all who were attached to the cause of monarchy. The Queen went to bed

¹ For further information on this subject the reader is referred to the "Memoirs of Madame Junot (Duchesse d'Abrantès)," vol. I., pp. 48-52 of the English edition, published in 1883.

late, or rather she began to be unable to rest. One evening, about the end of May, she was sitting in her room, relating several remarkable occurrences of the day; four wax candles were placed upon her toilet-table; the first went out of itself; I relighted it; shortly afterwards the second, and then the third went out also; upon which the Queen, squeezing my hand in terror, said to me: "Misfortune makes us superstitious; if the fourth taper should go out like the rest, nothing can prevent my looking upon it as a sinister omen." The fourth taper went out. It was remarked to the Queen that the four tapers had probably been run in the same mould, and that a defect in the wick had naturally occurred at the same point in each, since the candles had all gone out in the order in which they had been lighted.

The deputies of the *Tiers Etat* arrived at Versailles full of the strongest prejudices against the Court. They believed that the King indulged in the pleasures of the table to a shameful excess; and that the Queen was draining the treasury of the State in order to satisfy the most unbridled luxury. They almost all determined to see Petit Trianon. The extreme plainness of the retreat in question not answering the ideas they had formed, some of them insisted upon seeing the very smallest closets, saying that the richly furnished apartments were concealed from them. They particularised one which, according to them, was ornamented

with diamonds, and with wreathed columns studded with sapphires and rubies. The Queen could not get these foolish ideas out of her mind, and spoke to the King on the subject. From the description given of this room by the deputies to the keepers of Trianon, the King concluded that they were looking for the scene enriched with paste ornaments, made in the reign of Louis XV. for the theatre of Fontainebleau.¹

The King supposed that his Body Guards, on their return to the country, after their quarterly duty at Court, related what they had seen, and that their exaggerated accounts, being repeated, became at last totally perverted. This idea of the King, after the search for the diamond chamber, suggested to the Queen that the report of the King's propensity for drinking also sprang from the guards who accompanied his carriage when he hunted at Rambouillet. The King, who disliked sleeping out of his usual bed, was accustomed to leave that hunting-seat after supper; he generally slept soundly in his carriage, and awoke only on his arrival at the courtyard of his

¹ "An idea may be formed," says Montjoie, "of the life led by the Queen after the opening of the States General by what she described to the Duchesse de Polignac. In one letter she writes: 'My health still lasts, but my mind is overwhelmed with troubles, annoyances, and alarms; every day I learn new misfortunes, and for me one of the greatest is to be separated from all my friends. No longer do I meet hearts that sympathise with me.' In another she wrote: 'All your letters to M—— give me great pleasure: I see at least your writing, I read that you love me, and that does me good. Be tranquil; adversity has not diminished my strength and my courage, and it has increased my prudence.'"—NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

palace; he used to get down from his carriage in the midst of his Body Guards, staggering, as a man half awake will do, which was mistaken for intoxication.¹

The majority of the deputies who came imbued with prejudices produced by error or malevolence, went to lodge with the most humble private individuals of Versailles, whose inconsiderate conversation contributed not a little to nourish such mistakes. Everything, in short, tended to render the deputies subservient to the schemes of the leaders of the rebellion.

Shortly after the opening of the States General the first Dauphin died. That young Prince suffered from the rickets, which in a few months curved his spine, and rendered his legs so weak that he could not walk without being supported like a feeble old man.¹ How

¹ Boursault's play of "*Æsop at Court*" contains a scene in which the prince permits the courtiers to tell him his fallings. They all join chorus in praising him beyond measure, with the exception of one, who reproaches him with getting intoxicated, a dangerous vice in any one, but especially in a king. Louis XV., in whom that disgusting propensity had almost grown into a habit from the year 1739, found fault with Boursault's piece, and forbade its performance at Court. After the death of that King, Louis XVI. commanded "*Æsop at Court*" for performance, found the play full of good sense, and directed that it should be often performed before him. — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

¹ Louis, Dauphin of France, who died at Versailles on the 4th of June, 1765, gave promise of intellectual precocity. The following particulars, which convey some idea of his disposition, and of the assiduous attention bestowed upon him by the Duchesse de Polignac, will be found in a work of that time: "At two years old the Dauphin was very pretty; he articulated well, and answered questions put to him intelligently. While he was at the Château de La Muette everybody was at liberty to see him. The Dauphin was dressed plainly, like a sailor; there was nothing to distinguish him from other children in external appearance but the cross of

many maternal tears did his condition draw from the Queen, already overwhelmed with apprehensions respecting the state of the kingdom! Her grief was enhanced by petty intrigues, which, when frequently renewed, became intolerable. An open quarrel between the families and friends of the Duc d'Harcourt, the Dauphin's governor, and those of the Duchesse de Polignac, his governess, added greatly to the Queen's affliction. The young Prince showed a strong dislike to the Duchesse de Polignac, who attributed it either to the Duc or the Duchesse d'Harcourt, and came to make her complaints respecting it to the Queen. The Dauphin twice sent her out of his room, saying to her, with that maturity of manner which long illness always gives to children: "Go out, Duchess; you are so fond of using perfumes, and they always make me ill;" and yet she never used any. The Queen perceived, also, that his prejudices against her friend extended to

Saint Louis, the blue ribbon, and the Order of the Fleece, decorations that are the distinctive signs of his rank. The Duchesse Jules de Polignac, his governess, scarcely ever left him for a single instant: she gave up all the Court excursions and amusements in order to devote her whole attention to him. The Prince always manifested a great regard for M. de Bourset, his *valet de chambre*. During the illness of which he died, he one day asked for a pair of scissors; that gentleman reminded him that they were forbidden. The child insisted mildly, and they were obliged to yield to him. Having got the scissors, he cut off a lock of his hair, which he wrapped in a sheet of paper: 'There, monsieur,' said he to his *valet de chambre*, 'there is the only present I can make you, having nothing at my command; but when I am dead you will present this pledge to my papa and mamma; and while they remember me, I hope they will not forget you.'" — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

herself ; her son would no longer speak in her presence. She knew that he had become fond of sweetmeats, and offered him some marshmallow and jujube lozenges. The under-governors and the first *valet de chambre* requested her not to give the Dauphin anything, as he was to receive no food of any kind without the consent of the faculty. I forbear to describe the wound this prohibition inflicted upon the Queen ; she felt it the more deeply because she was aware it was unjustly believed she gave a decided preference to the Duc de Normandie, whose ruddy health and amiability did, in truth, form a striking contrast to the languid look and melancholy disposition of his elder brother. She even suspected that a plot had for some time existed to deprive her of the affection of a child whom she loved as a good and tender mother ought. Previous to the audience granted by the King on the 10th August, 1788, to the envoy of the Sultan Tippoo Saib, she had begged the Duc d'Harcourt to divert the Dauphin, whose deformity was already apparent, from his intention to be present at that ceremony, being unwilling to expose him to the gaze of the crowd of inquisitive Parisians who would be in the gallery. Notwithstanding this injunction, the Dauphin was suffered to write to his mother, requesting her permission to be present at the audience. The Queen was obliged to refuse him, and warmly reproached the governor, who merely answered that he could not

oppose the wishes of a sick child. A year before the death of the Dauphin the Queen lost the Princesse Sophie; this was, as the Queen said, the first of a series of misfortunes.

NOTE. As Madame Campan has stated in the foregoing pages that the money to foment sedition was furnished from English sources, the decree of the Convention of August, 1793, may be quoted as illustrative of the *entente cordiale* alleged to exist between the insurrectionary Government and its friends across the Channel! The endeavours made by the English Government to save the unfortunate King are well known. The motives prompting the conduct of the Duc d'Orléans are equally well known.

Art. i. The National Convention denounces the British Government to Europe and the English nation.

Art. ii. Every Frenchman that shall place his money in the English funds shall be declared a traitor to his country.

Art. iii. Every Frenchman who has money in the English funds or those of any other Power with whom France is at war shall be obliged to declare the same.

Art. iv. All foreigners, subjects of the Powers now at war with France, particularly the English, shall be arrested, and seals put upon their papers.

Art. v. The barriers of Paris shall be instantly shut.

Art. vi. All good citizens shall be required in the name of the country to search for the foreigners concerned in any plot denounced.

Art. vii. Three millions shall be at the disposal of the Minister at War to facilitate the march of the garrison of Mentz to La Vendée.

Art. viii. The Minister at War shall send to the army on the coast of Rochelle all the combustible materials necessary to set fire to the forests and underwood of La Vendée.

Art. ix. The women, the children, and old men shall be conducted to the interior parts of the country.

Art. x. The property of the rebels shall be confiscated for the benefit of the Republic.

Art. xi. A camp shall be formed without delay between Paris and the Northern army.

Art. xii. All the family of the Capets shall be banished from the French territory, those excepted who are under the sword of the law, and the offspring of Louis Capet, who shall both remain in the Temple.

Art. xiii. Marie Antoinette shall be delivered over to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and shall be immediately conducted to the prison of the Conciergerie. Louise Elisabeth shall remain in the Temple till after the judgment of Marie Antoinette.

Art. xiv. All the tombs of the Kings which are at St. Denis and in the departments shall be destroyed on August the 10th.

Art. xv. The present decree shall be despatched by extraordinary couriers to all the departments.

END OF VOLUME I.

